

A
TREATISE
OF
OATHS;

Containing
Several Weighty Reasons why the People
call'd *QUAKERS* refuse to SWEAR:

And those Confirmed by
Numerous Testimonies out of *Gentiles, Jews*
and *CHRISTIANS*, both *Fathers,*
Doctors and *Martyrs.*

Presented to the

K I N G
A N D
Great-Council of *England,*
Assembled in
PARLIAMENT.

Mat. 5. 34. *But I say unto you, Swear not at all.*

Jam. 5. 22. *Above all things, my Brethren, Swear not.*

Jer. 32. 10. *Because of Oaths the Land mourneth.*

Theognis, He ought to Swear neither this thing nor any thing.
Maimonides, It is a great Good for a Man not to Swear at all.
Chrysostom, It is not lawful to Swear, neither in a just nor
unjust Cause.

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TREASURY

OF THE



T O T H E
K I N G

And GREAT-COUNCIL of *Eng-
land*, Assembled in Parliament,

T H E
C A S E

Of the People call'd

Q U A K E R S,

Relating to O A T H S further Re-
presented ; and Recommended to
their Consideration, in order to a
Speedy and Effectual Redress.

THe common Benefit of the Free
People of England being
undoubtedly both the first and greatest
Reason for the Ancient, Just and
Necessary Constitution of Parlia-
ments ;

ments ; and being also inform'd
 That it is your Resolution, to employ
 this Session to the Redrels of Pub-
 lick Grievances : And since We
 cannot but repute our selves a Mem-
 ber of this Great Body you represent,
 by Birth and English Descent ;
 and are not only involved in the Com-
 mon Calamities of the Kingdom,
 but in Particular very cruelly
 Treated in our Persons and E-
 states, because we cannot for
 pure Conscience take any Oath
 at all, (though we have again and
 again tender'd our solemn Yea or
 Nay ; and are most willing to su-
 stain the same Penalty in Case of
 Lying, that is usually inflicted
 for Perjury.) To the end that we
 may not be interpreted to decline the
 Custom out of meer Humour or E-
 vasion (though our frequent and
 heavy Sufferings by Fines and
 tedious Imprisonments, some-
 times

times to Death it self, *should sufficiently Vindicate us against any such Incharitable Censure*) WE do, with all due Respect, present you with our Reasons for that *Tenderness*, and many Testimonies and Presidents in their Defence; and we entreat you, to express that Care of a Member of your own Civil Body, which Nature and Christianity excite to; We mean, That it would please you to consider, how deeply we have already suffered in Person and Estate, the Inconveniencies we have daily to encounter, and those Injurious not only to our selves, but others we commerce with, in that both They and We, because of our *Tenderness* in this Matter, are constantly at the Mercy of such as will Swear any thing to advantage themselves, where they are sure that

a Contrary Evidence shall be by Law esteem'd (*however True*) Invalid ; under which Difficulty Several of us at this Hour fruitlessly labour: *That being sensible of our Calamity, you may please to endeavour, as for others, so for this Grievance, both a Speedy and Effectual Redrels ; otherwise, besides ordinary Cases, wherein many of us extraordinarily suffer, We may perhaps prove in this of Oaths the Greatest, if not the Only Sufferers of the Kingdom ; a Cruelty, we hope, you do not design against us.*

God Almighty, we beseech him with all Sincerity of Heart, incline you to *Justice, Mercy and Truth,*
Amen.

London,

London, the 25th. of the
3d Month, 1675.

*Subscribed on the behalf of the rest
of our Friends by*

Alexander Parker,
George Whitehead,
Stephen Crisp,
William Mead,
Gerrard Roberts,
William Welsh,
Samuel Newton,
Thomas Heart,
John Osgood,
James Claypool,
Thomas Rudyard,
Richard Richardson,
William Penn.

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Some Inducements Offer'd

To Answer this

REQUEST,

From a Consideration of the
Cause *and* End of an OATH,

And those

REASONS

AND

TESTIMONIES

Given by us against the USE and
IMPOSITION of it.

The Ground or Reason of Swearing.

THis (we think) all will agree to
have been the *Degeneration* of
Man from primitive Integrity,
at what time *Yea* and *Nay* were
enough; for when men grew corrupt, they
distrusted each other, and had recourse to
extraordinary ways to awe one another into
Truth's-speaking, as a Remedy against
A Falleness;

Falseness; else what need had there been of an *Oath*, or any extraordinary way of Evidence, when every Syllable was freighted with Truth and Integrity? It had been a meer taking of God's Holy Name in vain: Truth then flowed naturally, and wanted no such Expedient to extort it's Evidence.

* Lived before
Chr. 200 Years
H. Grotius on
Mat 5.

Bp. Gauden
of Oaths, p 36

Thus, * *Polybius*, though an *Heathen*, in his Story of the *Romans*, saith, *Among the Ancients Oaths were seldom used in Judicatures themselves; but when Perfidiousness increased, Oaths increased, or then the Use of them first came in.*

In Psalm 14.

Basilius Magnus saith, *Oaths are an Effect of Sin.*

Jamb. 20.

Gregorius Nazianzenus in his Dialogue against Swearing, saith, *An Oath is nothing else but a certain consumation of Mischiefs.*

Comment on
Heb. Ch. 6.

Ambrosius saith, *Swearing is only in Condescension to a Defect.*

Hom. 9. on
Acts 3.

Chrysostom saith, *An Oath came in when Evils increased, when Men appeared unfaithful, when all things became Topsy Turvy. Again,*

Hom. Psal. 5.

To swear is of the Devil, seeing Christ saith, What is more (than Yea, &c.) is of Evil.

Ad Pop. Antioch

Swearing took it's Beginning for want of Truth or Punctuality.

On Mat. 5.

Augustin saith, *An Oath is not among Good, but Evil Things, and used for the Infirmary of others which is Evil, from which we pray that we may be daily delivered.*

Chromatius

Chromatius saith, *What need we Swear*, *On Mat. 5.*
seeing it is unlawful to Lye. Which shows,
 that Lying was the occasion of Oaths, and
 by leaving off Lying, Oaths vanish as un-
 profitable.

Titelmannus saith, that an Oath belongs not *On Plal. 14.*
 to Virtue.

Albertus Magnus saith, *Swearing is by In-* *On Mat. 5.*
dulgence.

Ludolphus saith, *An Oath was permitted of* *Vit. Chr. p.*
Infirmity. *2. c. 12.*

Brugensis cites *Jerome* saying, *Our Saviour* *On Mat. 5.*
teacheth that an Oath sprung from the Vices
of Men.

Bp. Gauden also tells us, *That the Evils* *Pag. 17 and 23*
of mens Hearts and Manners, the Jealousies
and Distrusts, the Dissimulations and Frauds
of many Christians, their Uncharitableness
and Insecurities are such, as by their Diseases
do make solemn Oaths and judicial Swearing
necessary, not ABSOLUTELY, MO-
RALLY or PRECEPTIVELY ;
but as a Remedy or Expedient.

Jerome (with many of the Fathers, *Chry-* *On Mat. 5. 36*
ostom, Theodoret, and others here omitted, *37.*
 because largely cited hereafter) make this
 the Reason why God indulged the Jews in
 the use of Swearing, *That they were but in*
the State of Infancy, and that they might be
kept from Swearing by False Gods ; which the
 Scripture is plain in : *For thou shalt fear*
the Lord thy God, and Swear by HIS Name *Deut. 6. 13,*
Ye shall not go after other Gods, for God is a *14, 15.*

jealous God, &c. Which shews, that he dispensed with Swearing by his Name, that he might take them off from Swearing by False God's, because they would thereby acknowledge them, and not the True God ; so that *Swearing* is only better than *Idolatry*.

It will remain, that we give our Reasons why we cannot take this Liberty, and *Swear*, as well as other Men have done, and yet do.

I. **T**He *first* is drawn from the Cause and Ground of Oaths, viz. *Perfidiousness, Distrust and Falshood*: God's *Injunctions* to avoid those hateful Crimes ; The *Ability* he hath given man to answer his Commands ; and Man's *Duty* to make that use of God's Gift : For if Swearing came in by *Perfidiousness, Distrust, Dissimulation and Falshood*, it is a most just Consequence that it ought to go out with them ; or that as the Rise and Increasing of those Evils were the Rise and Increasing of *Oaths* ; so the Decreasing and Extirpation of those Evils should be the Decreasing and Abolishing of *Oaths* ; otherwise there would be no Truth in the Rule of Contraries, nor Reason in that ancient *Maxim*, *Cessante Ratione Legis, cessat Lex* ; That the *Ceasing of the Reason of the Law, is the Cessation of the Law* : Expedients are no longer useful, than to obtain

Cosbin

obtain what they are designed to. Means are swallowed up of their Ends ; Diseased Men only want Remedies, and Lame Men Crutches ; Honesty needs neither Whip nor Spur, She is Security for her self ; and Men of Virtue will speak Truth without Extortings ; for Oaths are a sort of Racks to the Mind, altogether useless where Integrity sways.

This we presume no man of Reason will deny, *viz.* That *Swearing came in, and ought to go out with Perfidiousness!* and we hope it will be as easie to grant, at least it will be very easie to prove, That God hath frequently, both by Prophets and Apostles, reprov'd men for such Impieties, and strictly required Truth and Righteousness ; as *Isa.* 59. 3. 4. *Jer.* 9. 3, 5. *Rom.* 12. 19. *Gal.* 5. 19, 20, 21. *Col.* 3. 8, 9, 10. *Josh.* 24. 14. 1 *Sam.* 12. 24. 1 *Kings* 2. 4. *Eph.* 4. 25. and by abundance of other Places in Holy Scripture. And that God should enjoin man any thing that he hath not impowered him to perform, is unworthy of any man acknowledging a God, so much as to conceive. It is true, that the unprofitable Servant in the Parable is represented to entertain so blasphemous a Thought of his Maker, that he was so *hard a Master, as to reap where he did not sow* ; but the same Parable also acquaints us of the dreadful Consequence of that Presumption : The Prophet *Micha* preached another Doctrine, *The Lord* Mic. 6 8.

hath shewed thee, O Man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love Mercy, and to walk Humbly with thy God? For this End hath the Grace of God appeared unto all Men, as speaks the Apostle Paul to Titus, that they should be taught to deny Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, which entering and over-running the World, made way among other Expedients for that of Oaths; so that to live that Life which needs No Oath, man is both requir'd and impower'd: And as it is only his Fault and Condemnation, if he doth not; so certainly there can be no Obligation upon him who liveth that Life of Truth and Integrity to perpetuate that which rose, and therefore ought to fall with Falshood and Perfidiousness: The Reason of the thing it self excuses him; for, he that fearest telling Untruth, needs not swear, because he will not lye, to prevent which men exact Swearing: And he that doth not feare telling Untruth, what is his Oath worth? He that makes no Conscience of that Law that forbids Lying, will he make any Conscience of Forswearing? Veracity is the best Security; and Truth-speaking the Noblest Tye and Firmest Testimony that can be given. This we declare to you to be both our Judgment and Attainment; We speak not Boastingly, but with Humility before the Great Lord of Heaven and Earth, to whose alone Power we do unanimously ascribe the Honour:

He

He hath taught us to speak the Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth, as plainly and readily without an Oath, as with an Oath, and to abhor Lying as much as Perjury ; so that for us to swear, were to take his Holy Name in vain : Nor are we therein singular ; for that not only *Christian Fathers, Martyrs and Doctors*, but also *Jews and Heathens* have had this Sense of the Rise and Use of Oaths, as will hereafter fully appear.

II. Our *second* Reason, why we refuse to comply with this Custom, and our Superiours ought not to impose it, is this, *It would gratifie Distrusts, Humour, Jealousies, and subject Truth, and those that love it, to the same Checks, Curbs and Preventions, that have been invented against Fraud ; whereby the Honour of a Nobler Profession, the Power of a veracious Example, and the just Difference that ought to be made betwixt Trustiness and Diffidence, Integrity and Perfidiousness, are utterly lost.*

How is it possible for Men to recover that ancient Confidence, that good men reposed in one another, if some don't lead the Way, and hold forth to the World a Principle and Conversation beyond the Necessity of such extraordinary Expedients ? At present People lie all in a heap ; and the greatest Truth finds no more Favour than the greatest Fraud ; Fidelity must

wear the Shackles, worldly Prudence hath made against the evil Consequences of Couzennage, and subject herself to the Customs brought up through Fraud, or go to Goal. Be pleased to consider, that Trustiness did not all at once quit the World, nor will it return universally in the Twinkle of an Eye; Things must be allowed their time for Rise, Progress and Perfection : And if ever you would see the World planted with Primitive Simplicity and Faithfulness, rather cherish than make men Sufferers for Refusing to *Swear*, especially if they offer the same Caution to the Law with him that will swear. We dare not Swear, because we dare not Lye, and that it may appear to the World, that we can speak the Truth upon easier terms than an Oath : For us then to be forc'd to swear, is to make us do a needless thing, or to suspect our own Honesty. The first we dare not, because, as we have said, it is to take God's Name in vain; and we have no Reason to distrust our selves, being no ways conscious of fraudulent Purposes : Why then should we swear? But much rather, why should we be imposed upon ? It is a Saying ascribed to *Solon*, That a good man should have that Repute, as not to need an Oath ; that it is a Diminution to his Credit to be put to Swear. It becomes not an Evangelical Man to Swear, was a primitive Axiom ; But more of that anon : In the mean while please to remember, you have a Practice

Bp. Gauden
of Oaths, p 41

Practice among you, to exempt your Lords in several Cases, placing the value of an Oath in their bare Avouchment upon their Honour, supposing that men of those Titles should have so much Worth, as that their *Word* might be of equal Force with a Common Man's *Oath*: And if you will please to understand *Honour* in the Sense of the most ancient and best of Philosophers, to wit, *VIRTUE*, your own Custom gives Authority to our Reason, and makes you to say with us, *That Virtue needs not Swear, much less have Oaths imposed upon her, to tell Truth, the only Use of Oaths.* It was Evangelically spoken of *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *That a Good Life is a firm Oath*; which was memorably verified by the Judges of *Athens*, who, though *Heathens*, forbade the *Tendering of Xenocrates an Oath, because of their great Opinion of his Integrity*, which was Three Hundred Years before Christ came in the Flesh.

III. Our *third* Reason for Non-conformity to your Custom is, *the Fear we have, lest by Complying, we should be guilty of Rebellion against the Discoveries, God hath made to our Souls of his ancient holy Way of Truth; and consequently of concealing his Goodness to us, and depriving him of that Glory, and the World of that Advantage, this honest Testimony may bring to him and them.* He has redeem'd us from Fraud, 'Tis he only that hath begotten

ten this Conscientiousness in us; and we dare not put this Light under a Bushel, neither can we deny his Work, or him to have the Honour of it. We intreat you, take this Tenderness of ours into *Christian* Consideration.

IV. *Oaths* have in great measure lost of the *Reason of their primitive Institution*, since they have not that *Awful Influence*, which was, and only can be a Pretence for using them; on the contrary, they are become the *familiar parts of Discourse*, and help to make up a great share of the *A-la-mode* Conversation: and those who decline their Company, or reprove their Practice, are to go for a sort of *Nice and squeamish-Conscienc'd Men*. These *swear* without *Fear* or *Wit*, yet would be thought *Witty* in *Swearing*: Some are curious in their *Impiety*; *Old Oaths* are too *dull* for Men of their *Invention*, who almost shift *Oaths* with their *Fashions*: Nay, the most *judicial Oaths* are commonly administered and taken with so *little Reverence and Devotion* (to say nothing of the *Perjuries*, that through *Ignorance* or *Design* are too frequently committed) that we can't but cry out, *Oh the great Depravaty that is in the World!* How low is *Man* fal'n from the *primitive Rule of Life*? Well may the *Prophet's* Complaint be ours, for, *If ever Land mourned because of OATHS*, with great
Sadness

Sadnefs we fay it, *this doth*. And what more effectual Remedy can any People propofe againft the notorious Abuse and evil Confequence of *Swearing*, than *Truth-fpeak- ing*? For thofe that dare not *Lye*, need not *Swear*; and *they that make no Confcience of Lying*, do not much fear an *Oath*, at leaft their *Confciences* are very crazy in taking it. This only Reason, were we deftitute of all other Allegations, would be a ftrong Dif- fwafive from *Swearing*; for we hold God's Honour and our Profeflion greatly concern'd to prove to fo *False* an Age, that there is a People, who are fo far from *vain and false Swearing*, that they dare not *swear the Truth*; but whose *Yea* and *Nay* fhall weigh againft other mens *Oaths*, and that with a free Of- fer of *fuftraining double Punifhment in cafe of Mifcarriage*. Expedients may laft a while, but *TRUTH* only fhall have the Honour of conquering *Falshood*, and *Virtue* will and muft be greater than an *OATH*.

V. The *Omniprefency of God* rightly un- derftood, fhows the Ufelefsnefs of an *Oath*, and is with us a good Argument *againft Swearing*; for what need is there of that Man's being aw'd into true Evidence by fuch fort of Atteftations and Imprecations as make up the common Form of *Oaths*, who knows *God to be always prefent* to refide and prefide in his Soul, according to that New and Everlafting Covenant which he hath
made,

made, that his People should be his Temple, *that he would dwell IN them, and walk IN them.* Did the Children of men know the Power, Glory and Majesty of God. **WHOM** the Apostle preacht *NIGH* to the *Athenians*, and declared to the *Ephesians* to be *Father of all, above all, through all, and IN THEM ALL*, there would be *no Oaths*, and but *few Words*, and those utter'd with Reverence and Truth.

Acts 17. 27,
28.

Ephes. 4. 6.

VI. We do not find that *Oaths* answer this part of the End for which they are imposed, viz. *To convince those, for whose sakes they are taken, of the Weight and Truth of a Man's Testimony by Force of God's Witness joyn'd therewith:* For they don't behold God's concurring Witness by such an Assistance or Avenge of that Party, as the Truth or Falshood of his Testimony deserveth; for the Judgments of God are secret, and rarely so publickly seen to Men, perhaps once in an Age, that he should give any memorable Discovery of his good Will or Displeasure in such a Case; but whenever he doth it, it is not at Man's Appointment: And it is an evident Sign, that God approveth not of that sort of Invocation, because he doth not answer them that invoke him, according to their Wish; as neither did he in the old Law or Custom of *Combating* appear on his side, that had the better Title or Cause, as he promised in the Law
of

of *jealousie*, that their Thigh should rot, Numb. 5. 21,
and their Belly swell, &c. 22.

VII. We look upon it to be no less than a presumptuous *Tempting* of God, *To summon Him as a Witness* not only to our Terrene, but trivial *Busineses*; such as we should doubtless account it an high Indignity always to solicit an Earthly Prince to give his Attendance about. What! Make God, the Great God of Heaven and Earth our Caution in worldly Controversies, as if we would bind Him to obtain our own Ends? It is to make too bold with him, and to carry an undue Distance in our Minds towards him that made us; An Irreverence we can by no means away with, and upon which *Chrysostom* is most sharp, as will be seen anon. Besides it is vain and insolent to think that a *man* when he pleaseth, can make the *Great God of Heaven* a Witness or a Judge in any matter to appear by some signal Approbation or Judgment, to help or forsake him, as the Truth or Falseness of his *Oath* requires, when he saith, *So help me God*.

VIII. Besides what we have hitherto urged in Defence of our selves against the Substance of the *Oath*, we justly except against the *Form* of it (which further adds to it's Unlawfulness, and consequently to our Vindication) as by the *Contents* and *kissing*

ing of the Book; Swearing by a Sign, being
Fest ad La. Heathenish or Jewish. For the Romans held
pid. Polyp. l. 3 a Stone, and said, If I deceive wittingly, then
c. 25. Alex ab let Diespiter cast me out of my Goods, as I
Alex. l. 5 gen this Stone: The Heroes swore by lifting up
dier. 10. Cic. l of the Scepter: Caesar swore by his Head, his
5. Ep. 1. Arist. House, that is, consecrated them to the Wrath
3 Pol 10. Plin of God, if he wittingly deceived, &c. The
in pan. ad Tra- manner of the Jews is from Gen. 14. 22.
jan. c. 64. that Abraham lifted up his hand to God, OR,
If, &c. putting the hand under the Thigh, on
the Head; passing betwixt Beasts divided, as
God did to Abraham, &c. see more in La-
pid. Sophoc. in Antiq v. 270. Scoliaft.
Baptist. Hansen of passing through Fire,
swearing by the right Hand, &c.

Lindenbro.
c. 3. sect. 7.

The use of *So help me God*, we find from
the Law of the *Almans*, of King *Clotharius*:
The *laying on* of three Fingers above the Book
is to signify the *Trinity*; the Thumb and
the little Finger under the Book, are to sig-
nify the *Damnation* of Body and Soul, if
they forswear, *So help me God*.

Further be pleased to consider, that the
English Custom has very much overgone
English Law in this Business of Oaths;
they were anciently but solemn Attestations,
As the Lord liveth, &c. which are now im-
prov'd to Imprecations, *So help me God and*
the Contents of this Book: Though it was so
of old at *Combat*; but that concerns not our
Case. For the *Kissing of the Book*, that is
also *Novil*: Indeed after they rise from so-
lemn

lemn Attestations to Imprecations, the Law required a *Sight and Touch of the Book*. The *Saxon Jurors* were *Sacra tenentes*; In the first *Norman Times* it was *Sacristactis*; and in later *Writs*, *Evangeliiis tactis*; nay, the *Priest's Hand* was on *his Breast* (in *Mathew Paris*) not upon the *Book*. However *Jew* and *Gentile*, *Superstition* and *Ceremony*, have made up the present *Form of Oaths*, which the true *Christian man* neither wants, nor we conceive, ought to perform; much less impose where *Tendernets* by sober *Consciences* is pleaded, and equal *Caution* offered to the *Law* for the *Integrity of Yea and Nay*.

IX. But were we also destitute of this *Plea*, and the usual *Oaths of our Country* the most inoffensively form'd, and best penn'd that ever any were, we have both the *Example and Precept of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ*, to oppose to any such Practice; for in all that *History* delivered to us by the four *Evangelists*, we never read him to have used any further *Asseveration*, than what in *English* amounts to *Verely, Verely* or *Truly, Truly I say unto you*: Thus by his *Example* exciting us the more readily to obey his exprefs *Prohibition of Swearing*, Mat. 5. 33, 34, 35, 36, 37. which run thus, *Again, Ye have heard that it has been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thy self, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine Oaths; but*

I

I say unto you, SWEAR NOT AT ALL; neither by Heaven, for it is God's Throne; nor by the Earth, for it is his Footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the City of the great King; neither shalt thou swear by thy Head, because thou canst not make one Hair white or black; but let your Word be YEA, YEA; NAY, NAY; for whatsoever is MORE than THESE cometh OF EVIL.

He here prohibits even the *lesser Oaths*, as They thought them, that revered *Swearing by the Name of the Lord*, which in old time he suffered by reason of the Falseness of their Hearts, and great Proneness to *Idols*; even as *Moses* permitted them to *put away their Wives*, which in the precedent Verse also is disallowed by Christ, though with the *Exception of Fornication*; but *Swearing* without any *Exception*: He doth not say, *Swear not*, except *before a Magistrate*, (though he says, *Put not away thy Wife, except for the Cause of Fornication*) but *SWEAR NOT AT ALL*: why? *because it is OF EVIL*; which reason reaches the *Oaths* taken *before Magistrates*, as well as *other Oaths*; for *Distrust* and *Unfaithfulness* are the Cause of one as well as the other: And there is equal Reason in that respect, that a Master should *swear in private* to his Servant at his Entrance, that he will pay him his Wages, as that the Servant should *swear in publick to a Magistrate*, that
at

at his Departure his Master would not pay him his Wages; both which *Oaths*, the Certainty of their Words, their *Yea* being *Yea*, and their *Nay* being *Nay*, makes vain and superfluous.

Obj. We are not unsensible of the common *Objection*, that is made against this Allegation of our Master's Command, *That he only prohibited Vain Oaths in Communication*: But if the words of the *Text* and *Context* be consider'd, every Oath will be proved *Vain and Unlawful*; for Christ's Prohibition was not a meer Repetition of what was forbidden under the Law, but what the Law allowed, as Bishop Sanderson well observeth; *It was not needful, that Christ should forbid what was forbidden in it self, or was always Unlawful, which vain Swearing was and is by the third Commandment, Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain; therefore Christ exceeded the Prohibition of the Law*: And the whole Chapter is a Demonstration of a more excellent Righteousness than that which either needed or used *Oaths*; for Christ brings *Adultery* from the *Act* to the *Thought*; in lieu of *Revenge* he commands *Suffering*, and extends *Charity* not only to *Friends*, but *Enemies*; so in the Place controverted, in the room of such *Oaths* and *Vows*, as ought to be performed unto the Lord, he introduces *Yea* and *Nay*, with a most absolute **SWEAR NOT AT ALL**. This was the Advance he

Bp. R. Sanderson de Jur. Oblig. p. 141.

B

made

made in his excellent *Sermon* upon the Mount; he wound up things to an higher pitch of *Sanctity* than under the Law, or the childish State of the *Jews* could receive. *Again*, saith he, *Ye have heard of old time, thou shalt not forswear thy self, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine Oaths; but I say unto you, SWEAR NOT AT ALL*; as plain, general and emphatical a Prohibition as can be found in Holy Scripture. However, those Persons that usually advocate for the Continuance of *Oaths* under the Gospel, tell us, it is not a general Prohibition, but is limited to *Swearing by Creatures, either by Heaven, Earth, Jerusalem or Head, &c.* Which is wholly inconsistent with the Scope of the Place, as we shall make appear from these Four Considerations: 1st. The Prohibition reaches as well to serious as vain Oaths, such as men made, if they swore at all, and ought to make to God only; for to him alone should they perform them, and are they accountable for them: These very allowed Oaths of Old Time, are the first prohibited by Jesus Christ; *It was said of Old, thou shalt not Forswear thy self; but I say SWEAR NOT AT ALL*. 'Tis true, it is not particularized what *Oaths* they were to keep of old; but in general Terms, that they were not to *Forswear* themselves; and it is clear that God enjoined them that would Swear, that they should only Swear by *his Name*. Now
what

what can be hence inferred more evidently, than that Men ought not to swear those Oaths under the Gospel, which they might swear, and ought not to forswear, but to perform unto the Lord in the Law. *2dly.* Christ himself gives the Explanation of his own Words, Chap. 23. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. where he teacheth us, *That he that swears by the Temple, swears by it, and by him that dwells therein; and he that shall swear by Heaven, swears by the Throne of God, and by him that sits thereon: So that he that swears by the Head, swears by him that made it: and he that swears by the Earth, swears by him that created it: which leaves no room for the Objection, for it is as if Christ should have said, I not only command you not to Forswear, but perform, as it was said to them of old time; but I charge you, NOT TO SWEAR AT ALL: I mean, not only that you should not swear by God, and those Oaths that the Pharisees account Binding; but also, that you should not so much as swear by those lesser Oaths, as they esteem them, and which they are wont to swear by; for they are not less nor more allowable, in that they that swear by them, swear by him that is the Author and Maker of them: wherefore being of the same Nature with the other, I forbid you to swear by them, as well as by those Oaths that were of old time made, and ought not to be broak, but perform'd unto the Lord; for this is one of my*

great Commandments, which they must keep that will be my Disciples, that is to say, **SWEAR NOT AT ALL.** Our 3^d Inducement to believe this to have been the Intention of our Lord Jesus Christ, is the concurrent *Testimony* of the Apostle *James*, which is not only a Repetition of his Master's Doctrine, but an *Addition and Illustration*, we hope sufficient to determine the present Question with every unprejudic'd Reader ; *But above all things, my Brethren* (saith he) *swear not* ; which runs parallel with *Swear not at all* : The Negative is as general and forcible. He proceeds, *neither by Heaven, neither by the Earth* ; Words of equal Import with the latter part of Christ's Prohibition : and as if he had foreseen the Cavils of our Swearing Adversaries, he adds, *neither by any other Oath* ; which though as clear as the Sun, if yet for their last shift they should tell us, that he only meant *any other Oath* of that kind, not that he prohibited *Swearing by the Name of the Lord*, it will not do their Business ; for that Christ hath already assured us, *Whosoever swears by Heaven, swears by him that sits thereon* ; and the very next words show, that it was not his Design only to prohibit *vain*, but plainly to exclude *all* Swearing, *But let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay, Nay, lest ye fall into Condemnation* ; else why had he not said, *but you may swear by the Name of God before a Magistrate* ? Why must

must *Neither by any other Oath* be added after such a plain Prohibition, as, *My Brethren, above all things Swear not?* And why must *Yea* and *Nay* be substituted in the room of an *Oath*, if it was yet intended by the Apostle, that *Christians* might rise higher in their Evidence, than a bare *Affirming* or *Denying*? that is, Though their *Yea* be never so truly *Yea*, and their *Nay* never so sincerely *Nay*, or the very Truth of the Matter be spoken, which is the Import of the Words; yet that they *ought to swear*. What is this but to *contradict* the natural Tendency of the Command of Christ and his Apostles? Which is plainly this; *If your Yea be Yea, it is enough; if your Nay be Nay, it is sufficient; for Christians ought not to swear, if they do, they fall into Condemnation*, in that they break their Master's Command, who hath told them, that *Whatsoever is more than Yea or Nay, cometh of Evil*, which is the Ground of all Oaths; for they ought to mean so simply and honestly in what they say, as that they should never need to *swear* in order to tell the Truth. Our 4th. and last Consideration, and that which to us seemeth of great Moment to clear up our Lord and Saviour's sense, and rescue the Passage from the Violence of *Objectors*, is this Clause, *For whatsoever is MORE than Yea, Yea, and Nay, Nay, cometh of Evil*. This cannot be intended of more Words than *Yea, Yea, and Nay, Nay*, provided they are not

of an higher Strain, but of the same Degree of Speech, importing a plain Assertion or Denial of a thing ; for it is not the Number, but Nature of the Words spoken, that is here prohibited : Nor can it be only understood of *Perjury* ; for every body knows that to be evil in it self, which is *more* than that which cometh OF, or because of *Evil*. Therefore it must be understood as well of *Swearing*, as of *Forswearing*, which is not Evil in it self, yet cometh of, or by Reason of Evil in the World : Nor is there any thing *more than Yea and Nay* besides *Perjury*, which can be intended, but an *Oath* ; and therefore that was intended. Christ doth not only prohibit Evil it self, but that which is Evil by *Superfluity* to Evangelical Sincerity, and that *Swearing* is (be it of what sort it will) wherever *Yea* is *Yea*, and *Nay* is *Nay*. In short, If what is *More than Yea and Nay*, cometh of *Evil* ; then because any *Swearing*, as well as *Forswearing*, is *more* than *Yea* and *Nay* ; it follows, that any *Swearing* cometh of *Evil*, and therefore ought to be rejected of *Christians*. Nor will our *English* Translation of *1d2* shelter our *Objectors* : For, *Communication* doth not exclude those many Cases that require Evidences among men, no nor any the least Action of Man's Life ; on the contrary, they have a great Place in *Human Communication*, which is comprehensive of the various *Discourses* and *Transactions*

actions of a Man's Life, as 2 *Kings* 9. 11. 2 *Sam.* 3. 17. *Eph.* 4. 29. *Col.* 3. 8. 1 *Cor.* 15. 33. It is a word of the same Extent with *Conversation*, which takes in all that can happen between man and man in this World: Thus the Psalmist, *To him that ordereth his Conversation aright*, Psalm 50. 23. So the Apostle, *Let your Conversation be, as becomes the Gospel*, Phil. 1. 27. Besides, *λογος* may be rendred *Word*, as in *Joh.* 1. 1. and the *Italian* and *French* Translations have it, *Let your Word be Yea, Yea; Nay, Nay*; as much as if Christ had said, As I do not only condemn the Act for Adultery, which the Law did, but also the Conception of the Mind; and not only Murder, but Revenge likewise; so I do not only condemn *Forswearing*, which is done to my hand in the Law of God, but prohibit *Swearing at all*; for I make that to be Unlawful, which the Law doth not call Unlawful: Therefore when your Evidence is called for, *Swear not at all*, but let your Word be *Yea, Yea*, and *Nay, Nay*; that is, Do not speak Untruth; for that is Evil: Don't Swear; for that comes of Evil. To conclude; People *swear* to the end they may *speake Truth*; Christ would have Men *speake Truth*, to the end they might *not swear*: he would not have his Followers upon such base Reserves, but their Word to carry the Weight of an Oath in it; that as others ought not to be guilty of Perjury, *Christi-*

ans ought not to be guilty of Lying : For such is the Advance from *Moses* to *Christ*, *Jew* to *Christian*, that as the *Christian* needs not the *Jew's* Curb, so his Lye is greater than the *Jews* Perjury, because his Yea or Nay ought to be of more value than the other's Oath.

X. And lastly ; besides these express Prohibitions, *Swearing* is forbidden by the very nature of *Christianity*, and unworthy of him that is the *Author* of it, who came not to implant so imperfect a Religion, as that which needed Oaths, or should leave Fraud, the Ground of Swearing, unextirpated ; but to promulgate that Gospel, which retrieves ancient Sincerity, builds up waste Places, restores those Breaches, Oaths entered at, and leads into the Ancient Holy Paths of Integrity they never trod in : He is that powerful Lord, which cureth the Diseases of all them that come unto him, and Mystical Serpent exalted, that relieves all that believingly look up to him : His Office is to make an End of *Sin*, that made way for Swearing, and introduce that Everlasting Righteousness, which never needs it ; The Religion he taught, is no less than Regeneration and Perfection ; such Veracity as hath not the least Wavering ; Sincerity throughout, that it might not only exceed the Righteousness of the Swearing *Jews*, but that Law which permitted it till the

the Times of Restitution, which he brought to the Degenerated World, who said, *Swear not at all* ; for the *Law* that permitted Oaths, *was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth*, that ends them, *came by Jesus Christ*, who therefore prohibits them. And not only is this Gospel of Christ, or the Holy Religion he taught, of so pure and excellent a Nature ; but those who will be his Disciples, are obliged to obey it, inso- much that he himself hath said, *If ye love me, keep my Commandments ; and if ye keep my Commandments, ye shall abide in my Love.* John 14. 15. Again, *Ye are my Friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you : If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross, and follow me : For I say unto you, that except your Righteousness shall exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter the Kingdom of Heaven : Be ye therefore Perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect.* John 15. 10. Mat. 16. 24. Mat. 5. 20, 48. These are the weighty Sayings of our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ; and certainly, he who breaks not the *least Commandment* (forbidden Vers. 19) who *can suffer* rather than *Revenge, love Enemies, and be perfect*, as his Heavenly Father is perfect, is *above the Obligation of an Oath unto Truth-speaking*. His Disciples preacht not another Gospel than their Master's, who prayed that those, who believed might be sanctified **THROUGH-OUT**, in Body, Soul and Spirit, which is a perfect

1 Thess. 5. 23.

- perfect Removal of the Ground of Swearing ; and they were exhorted to *press after the Mark of the Price of this High and Holy Calling, until they should all come unto a perfect Man, unto the Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of Christ Jesus : For even hereunto* (saith Peter) *were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an Example, that ye should follow his Steps, who did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth : And*
- Phil. 3. 14.** *saith John, As he is, so are we in this World. If No Guile be found in our Mouths, then No Oaths ; for they came because of Guile : And if we ought to resemble him in this World, then must our Communication be Yea, Yea, and Nay, Nay ; that is we must live the Life of Truth, and speak the Words of Truth, which ought to be of greater Force than Oaths, that come of Evil. If the Righteousness of the Law ought to be fulfilled in us, we ought not to swear, because we ought to be so Righteous as not to Lye. This is Evangelical ; for as he that conceives not a foul or revengeful Thought, need not to purge himself of Adultery and Murder : Neither is there any Reason, that man should purge himself of Lying by Swearing, that doth not so much as countenance an untrue Thought. The Language of the same Apostle to the Ephesians further explains this Exangelical Evidence,*
- Ephes. 4. 20,** *But ye have not so learned Christ, if so be*
21, 22, 23, *that ye have heard him, and have been taught*
24, 25. *by*

by him, as the Truth is in Jesus ; That ye put off concerning the former Conversation the Old Man, which is Corrupt, according to the Deceitful Lusts, and be renewed in the Spirit of your Mind, and that you put on the New Man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness ; Wherefore **PUTTING AWAY LYING, SPEAK EVERY MAN TRUTH** with his Neighbour : Beyond which, there can be no Assurance given or desired. And if *Christians* ought never to *Lye*, it is most certain they need never to *Swear* ; for *Swearing* is built upon *Lying*, Take away *Lying*, and there remains no more ground for *Swearing* ; *Truth-speaking* comes in the room thereof : And this not only the *Christian-Doctrine* teaches and requires ; but *Christ*, the blessed Author of it, is ready to *work in the Hearts of the Children of Men*, would they but come and learn of him, *who is Meek, Lowly, filled with Grace and Truth*. And we must needs say, It is a shameful thing, and very Dishonourable to the Christian Religion, that those who pretend themselves to be the Followers of Christ, for so true Christians ought to be, should so degenerate from his Example and Doctrine, as to want and use swearing Affeuerations, dispenced with in some of the weakest Times of Knowledge, and such horrible Imprecations (never known to ancient *Jews* and *Christians*) to ascertain one another of their Faith and Truth : Religion

gion must needs have suffered a great Ebb, and *Christianity* a fearful Ecclips since those brighter Ages of its Profession: For Bishop *Gauden* himself, in his Discourse of *Oaths*, confesses, That *the ancient Christians were so strict and exact, that there was no need of an Oath among them; yea they so kept up the Sanctity and Credit of their Profession among Unbelievers, that it was Security enough in all Cases to say, Christianus sum, I am a Christian.*

But to fortifie what we have hitherto urged in Defence of our Judgment and Practice; and to the end it may more fully appear, that our Tenderness in this great Case of *Oaths* comes not from any Sower, Sullen or Superstitious Humour, or that we would trouble the World with any New-fangled Opinion, we shall produce the concurrent *Testimonies* of several Famous and Good Men for above these Two Thousand Years, among *Gentiles, Jews and Christians*, enough to make an *Occumenical Council*; We shall cite them out of the best Editions, we have been able to procure, and as truly and punctually as we can render them, digested in Order of Time.

Memorable TESTIMONIES against Swearing, collected out of the Writings of Gentiles, Jews and Christians ; some of which were deliver'd to the World several Ages before Swear not at all was writ by Matthew, or spoaken by Christ ; which make Swearing, but especially Punishing for not Swearing, among Christians, so much the more Disallowable.

The Whole publisht not only in Favour of our Cause ; but for the Instruction of the World, and to their Just Honour that said and writ them, as durable Monuments of their Virtue.

I. The Sayings of the *Gentiles* or *Heathens*, in Dislike of OATHS.

Our Two First Testimonies shall be the Practice of Two Great People, the *Persians* and *Scythians*.

Diodorus Siculus, lib. 16.

I. **A**mong the *Persians*, saith *Diodorus Siculus*, Giving the Right Hand was the Token of Truth-speaking : These Nations were many Hundred Years before Christ.

‘ing : *He that did it Deceitfully, was counted more Detestable, than if he had Sworn.* Which plainly implies, that Swearing was Detested among them, as well as that they needed not to Swear, who so much used Truth-speaking.

Quint. Curt. in vit. Alex.

II. The *Scythians*, as it is reported by *Q Curtius*, in their Conference with *Alexander*, upon occasion of an expected Securi-ty, told him, ‘*Think not that the Scythi-ans confirm their Friendship by Oath ; they Swear by keeping their Word.* Which is not only a Proof of their Disuse of Com-mon Oaths, but Swearing at all, even in Matters of greatest importance.

Plutarch Rom. Quest. 28.

Lived before
Christ about
1280 Years, be-
ing in the days
of *Gideon*,
Judg. 8.

III. ‘*So Religious was Hercules, saith Plutarch, that he never swore but once.* If it was Religiously done to swear but once in a Man’s Life, it had been more Religi-ously done not to swear at all. How just and severe a Censure is this out of an *Hea-then’s* Mouth upon the Practice of Disso-lute *Christians* ?

Hesiod. Theogon. p. 88.

Before Christ
800 Years, in
the days of *Ho-
sea, Joel and
Amos.*

IV. *Hesiod* in his *Theogonia* places an Oath amongst the *Brood of Contention* ; ‘*An Oath, saith he, greatly hurts men.* Again presently, ‘*An Oath goes with corrupt Judg-ments ;*

ments ; or an Oath flies away together with corrupt Judgments, that is, when Justice appears among men, Oaths vanish, as his Scope in that place shews.

Sociad. in Stob. 18.

V. It was one part of the Doctrine of the Seven Sages, so famous in Greece, ' That men ought not to swear.

Before Christ
620 Years ; in
the days of Jo-
siab.

Stob. Serm. 3.

VI. Solon, the famous Law-giver of Athens, and one of those Seven Sages, exhorted the People to ' observe Honesty more strictly than an Oath. As if he had said, Honesty is to be preferr'd before Swearing, as another Saying of his imports, ' A good Man should have that Repute, as not to need an Oath ; it is a Diminution to his Credit to be put to Swear, Bp. Gauden of Oaths, p. 41.

Theognis, ver. 660.

VII. Theognis, the Greek Poet, writing of a Person Swearing, saith, ' Neither ought he to swear this or anything : This Thing or Swearing (it self) shall not be. What is this less than Swear not at all ?

Before Christ
593 Years.

Valer. Max. lib. 8. cap. 18. Laert. Hermip. & Orig. contr. Cels.

VIII. Pythagoras, a grave and virtuous Person, being earnestly intreated of the Cro-
tonian

Before Christ
590 Years ;
These Three

Persons liv'd
in the time of
Jeremiah and
Ezekiel.

tonian Senators for his Advice in things relating to the Government, did in his Oration, among other Excellent Sentences, with more than ordinary Emphasis, lay this down in the nature of a Maxim, ' *Let no man attest God by an Oath, though in Courts of Judicature ; but use to speak such things, as that he may be credited without an Oath.*

H. Grot. on Mat. 5. 34.

Before Christ
560 Years.

IX. *Clineas*, a Just Greek, and Follower of *Pythagoras*, out of Love to Truth, and Respect he bore his Master's Doctrine, that enjoined him to fear and shun an Oath, chose to pay *Three Talents*, which amount to about Three Hundred Pounds, rather than he would take any Oath : Whole Example *Basilus Magnus* upbraided the *Christians* of his Time with, that were then learning to Swear.

Hierocles Comment in *Carm.*

Pythag. p. 28.

Before Christ
422 Years in
the time of *A-*
basuerus, *Ezra*
4.

X. *Hierocles* testifies, ' That *Pythagoras*, in enjoining them to revere an Oath, not only prohibits *Forswearing*, but requires them also to abstain from *Swearing*.

And *Ashilus* makes a sincere Beckon to a Matter, a firm Oath.

Before Christ
422 Years; in
the days of
Haggai and
Zachariah.

Stobæus Scrm. 114.

XI. *Socrates*, that worthy Gentile, and great Promoter of Virtue among the *Athenians*,

nians, among many Excellent Sentences delivered this, ' *That Good Men must let the World see, how that their Manners or Dealings are more firm than an Oath.* Which both proves that he saw a more Excellent Righteousness than Swearing Truth it self, and believed it attainable; for he manifestly exhorts Good Men to that Integrity, which is a greater Caution than an Oath. He was put to Death for testifying against the Heathen Idols, acknowledging One only God.

Plut. in Lacon. Epoph.

XII. *Lysander*, the great Spartan Captain thought an Oath of so little Value in comparison of Truth, that he bestowed this contemptuous Saying upon Swearing, ' *Children are to be deceived with Toyes, and Men with Oaths.* Implying that Sincerity is a greater Security than an Oath. Before Christ 400 Years.

Isocr. ad Demon.

XIII. *Isocrates*, a Greek Orator, in his Oration to *Demonicus*, advises, ' *Not to take an Oath for Money matters.* Also he teaches, ' *That Good Men should shew themselves more credible than an Oath.* Before Christ 394 Years.
These Two lived in the days of Malachi.

Plat. de Leg. 12.

XIV. *Plato* (call'd Divine) forbids Swearing in solemn Cases, ' *That none swear* Before Christ 366 Years.
C himself,

‘ himself, That none require an Oath of another. He speaks there, how *Rhadamanthus* brought in Swearing by the Gods; but that his Art therein was not agreeable to that Time (it seems he accounted it an Art of Policy) ‘ But that in all Actions or Causes, Laws which are made with Understanding, should take away Swearing from both Adversaries. For (saith he) it is an Horrible Thing, that when many Judgments are done in a City, well near half the People are forsworn in them— Therefore let the Presidents of Judgments not permit any to swear in Actions, not even for Perswasions sake; but that he persevere in that which is Just, with a fitting Speech, &c.

Valer. Max. 10 Cic. pro Corn. Balb.

Diog. Laert. in vit. Xenocr.

Before Christ
337 Years,

XV. *Xenocrates* was so renowned at Athens, for his Virtuous Life and great Integrity, that being called to give his Evidence by Oath, all the Judges stood up and forbad the Tender, because they would not have it thought, that Truth depended more upon an Oath, than the Word of an Honest Man.

Menander.

Before Christ
336 Years,

XVI. *Menander*, the Greek Poet, saith, ‘ Flee an Oath, though thou shouldest swear justly.

Cherillus

Cherillus in Perscid.

XVII. *Cherillus* saith, ' *Oaths bring not Credit to the Man, but the Man must bring Credit to the Oaths.* What serve they for then? to deceive? It seems by this, that Credit is better than an Oath; for it is the Credit that is the Security, not the Oath.

Stobæus in Jur. c. 27.

XVIII. *Alexiades in Olynth*, saith, ' *A Wise Man ought always to give Credit, not to Swearers, but to the Things themselves.* Then Oaths are vain; for it is not the meer Oath, but the Likelihood of the Truth of the Evidence, from the Consideration and Comparing of the Circumstances, that turns the Scale.

Simocat. Epist. 33. F.

XIX. *Simocatus*, ' *Perfidiousness appears securer than Faithfulness; and an Oath imposed is a fit Engine for Deceit.* Strange! that faithful Yea and Nay is stopt, when Perfidiousness with an Oath can pass all Guards, Courts and Offices. He manifestly links Oaths and Perfidiousness, and gives the Praise to Faithfulness.

H. Grot. on Mat. 5.

XX. *Epictetus*, a famous and grave Stoick counselled, ' *to refuse an Oath altogether.*

Quint. l. 8.

XXI. *Quintilian* saith, that ' in Time
' past it was a kind of *Infamy for Grave and*
' *Approved Men to Swear*, as if their Autho-
' rity should suffice for Credit: Therefore
' the Priests or *Flamins* were not compelled
' to it; for then *to compel a Noble Man to*
' *Swear, were like putting him upon the Rack,*
' &c. Which shows an Oath to be an Un-
natural and Extorting Way of Evidence,
and that they preferred Virtue and Truth
before an Oath.

Plutarch Rom. quest. 44.

XXII. *Plutarch* in his 44th *Rom. quest.*
upon the Custom of the *Romans*, holding it
Unlawful for the *Flamin Dialis*, or Chief
Priest, to Swear, puts the Question, ' *Why*
' *is it not Lawful for Jupiter's Priest to Swear?*
' Is it because an Oath ministred unto
' Freemen is as it were the *Rack and Tor-*
' *ture tendred unto them?* For, certain it is
' that the Soul, as well as the Body of the
' Priest ought to continue free, and not be
' forced by any Torture whatsoever; or for
' that it is not meet to Distrust or Discre-
' dit him in small Matters, who is believed
' in Great and Divine Things? or rather
' because every Oath endeth with *Detesta-*
' *tion and Malediction of Perjury?* And con-
' sidering that all Maledictions be odious
' and abominable, therefore it is not
' thought

' thought good, that any other Priests
 ' whatsoever should Curse, or pronounce
 ' any Malediction : And in this respect was
 ' the Priestess of *Minerva* in *Athens* highly
 ' commended, for that she would never
 ' curse *Alcibiades*, notwithstanding the Peo-
 ' ple commanded her so to do ; For I am
 ' (quoth she) ordained a Priestess to pray for
 ' Men, and not to curse them. Or last of
 ' all, was it, because the Peril of Perjury
 ' would reach in common to the whole
 ' Common-wealth, if a Wicked, Godless
 ' and Forsworn Person should have the
 ' Charge and Superintendency of the Pray-
 ' ers, Vows and Sacrifices made in the be-
 ' half of the City ? Thus far *Plutarch*,
 whose Morals have the Praise among all the
 Writings of *Philosophers* ; who is also
 commended himself very highly for his Vir-
 tue and Wisdom. See his Life.

M. Aur. Ant. in Descript. bon. Vir.

XXIII. *M. Aurelius Antoninus*, that
 Philosophical Roman Emperor, in his De-
 scription of a Good Man, says, ' That the
 ' Integrity of a truly good Man is such, that
 ' there is no need of an Oath for him. Cer-
 tainly then he was far from Imposing Oaths
 upon his People, who both by his Example
 and Precept preferr'd Integrity before an
 Oath.

Libanius.

XXIV. *Libanius*, a Greek Orator, though otherwise no Admirer of *Christians*, reckons this among the Praises of a *Christian* Emperor; 'He is (says he) so far from being blackt with Perjury, that he is even afraid to swear the Truth. It seems then, they swore not in his time; and that *Libanius*, an Enemy to *Christians*, preferred and admired *Swear not at all*.

Auson. Epist. 2.

XXV. We shall conclude with *Ausonius*, whose saying seems to be all contracted, or those other Testimonies digested into one Axiom, that is, 'To swear or speak falsely, is one and the same thing.

These are the Reflections upon *Oaths* we receive from *Heathens*, who by the Light they had, both discerned the Scope of the Evangelical Doctrine, *Swear not at all*, preceptively laid down by Christ our Lord, *Mat. 5. 34.* and prest it earnestly: And which is more to their Honour, but to the *Christians* Shame, several of them lived it sincerely.

II. Testimonies from the Jews in Dislike of *All Swearing*.

H. Grot. Com. on Mat. 5. 34.

XXVI. **M**aimonides, out of the most ancient of the Jewish Rab-
bies extracts this Memorable Axiom,
'IT IS BEST FOR A MAN NOT
'TO SWEAR AT ALL.

Raimund. p. 135.

XXVII. *Raimundus* quotes him thus, If it be a great Good, not to Swear at all; what is it to impose an Oath
'Maimonides in tract. de juramentis; IT
'IS A GREAT GOOD FOR A MAN
'NOT TO SWEAR AT ALL; The
'ancient and lawful Doctrine of the Synagogue.

Joseph. de bello Judaico l. 2. c. 7.

XXVIII. 'The *Essent* or *Essæans* (saith Josephus) 'keep their Promise, and account
'every Word they speak of more force than if
'they had bound it with an Oath; and they
'shun Oaths worse than Perjury; for they e-
'steem him condemned for a Lyar, who is not
'believed without calling God to witness.

'These *Essæans* were the most Religious
'of the Jewish People, though the Phara-
'sees made the greatest Noise amongst the
'Rabble.

Philo de Decalogo, p. 583.

XXIX. *Philo*, that excellent Jew, relates thus much concerning the same *Essaens*,
 ‘ *That whatsoever they said, was firmer than*
 ‘ *an Oath; And that to Swear was counted*
 ‘ *amongst them a thing superfluous.*

Philo Judæus on Com. 3d.

XXX. The same *Philo* himself thus taught in his Treatise on the Ten Commandments; *Commandment 3d.* Thou shalt not take the Name of God in vain: ‘ *Ma-*
 ‘ *ny ways* (saith he) *do men sin against this*
 ‘ *Commandment; so THAT IT IS BET-*
 ‘ *TER NOT TO SWEAR AT ALL;*
 ‘ *but so well accustom thy self to speak Truth*
 ‘ *always, that thy Bare Word shall have the*
 ‘ *Force and Virtue of an Oath. It is become a*
 ‘ *Proverb, That to swear well and holily is a*
 ‘ *second Voyage; for he that sweareth is sus-*
 ‘ *pected of Lying and Perjury. It is, saith*
 ‘ *he, most profitable and agreeable to the rea-*
 ‘ *sonable Nature, to abstain ALTOGETHER*
 ‘ *from Swearing. Whatsoever a godly Man*
 ‘ *speaks, let it go for an Oath.*

Page 583.

Page 515.

The Wisdom and Moderation of this worthy Personage reflects just Blame upon those that Pillage their Neighbours, because they Conscientiously Refuse an Oath: But that Men, who pretend to be the Disciples of Jesus Christ, should commit these Cruelties,

elties, aggravates their Evils, and doubtless their Guilt. How can they ever hope to look their Lord with Comfort in the Face, who so severely treat their Fellow-servants? Certainly *Jews* and *Heathens* will one day rise up in judgment against such *Christians*, for their unnatural Carriage towards their Brethren : This is not to love Enemies, but injure Friends. *Jews* and *Heathens* are become Names of Reproach ; yet to the Rebuke of *Christians*, as they call themselves, they not only discern'd the Rise and Ground of Oaths, but the Evil of using them, even while they were tolerated ; and both avoided them, and exhorted others to that Integrity, which had no need of them.

These Testimonies, though they are of Weight with us, and we hope they will have a due Impress upon the Minds of many of our Readers ; yet because nothing produced out of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, may advance our Cause with some, or render it ever the more acceptable, We shall next betake our selves to the more *Christian* Ages of the World, for Approbation of our Judgment, who we are sure will kindly entertain us, their Liberality being Extraordinary to our Cause ; and from whom we shall never want *Votes* for **SWEAR NOT AT ALL**, while their Works are in the World : May our *Superiors* join theirs with them, and we have Reason to believe, that
our

our Deliverance from the Yoak of Oaths will be the happy Issue of this necessary Address.

III. Testimonies from *Christians*, both *Fathers*, *Doctors* and *Martyrs*, in Dislike of *All Swearing*.

Polycarpus.

XXXI. **T**He first Testimony recorded against Swearing after the Apostles Times, was that of *Polycarpus*, who had lived with the Apostles, and was said to have been Disciple to *John*, not the least of the Apostles; for at his Death, when the Governour bid him *Swear*, *Defie Christ*, &c. he said, ‘ *Fourscore and Six Years have I served him, yet hath he never offended me in any thing.* The *Proconsul* still urged and said, *Swear by the Fortune of Cæsar*; to whom *Polycarpus* answered, ‘ *If thou requirest this Vain-glory, that I protest the Fortune of Cæsar, as thou sayest, feigning thou knowest not who I am, hear freely, I AM A CHRISTIAN.* This Good Man began his *Fourscore and Six Years*, which was about *Twenty Years* after *James* wrote *Above all things, my Brethren, Swear not*; and

*Euseb. Eccles
Hist. lib. 4. cap
15.*

and several Years before *John* the Apostle deceased ; for he is called his Disciple. See his History and Commendation in *Eusebius*.

We know it is objected by some, That he refused to Swear only because he could not swear by that Oath, which is a Guess, and no Confutation of what we alledge : But if that had been *Polycarpus's* Reason, why did he not rather say, The Law of God forbids Swearing by Idols ? 'Tis certain the first *Christians* would not Swear, but thought *Polycarpus's* Answer Security enough to them that demanded their Oath : He refused all Oaths as a *Christian*, therefore saying, he was a *Christian*, was Reason sufficient, why he would not take that Oath.

Justin Martyr, Apol. 2. pro *Christianis*,
ad *Anton. Pium*, oper. p. 63.

XXXII. It was some time before his Suffering that *Justin Martyr*, who is the first we find writing of it, publisht an *Apology* for the *Christians* in the Year 150. as himself saith, and a second after that, wherein he tells us, after the Doctrine of his Master, ' *That we should NOT SWEAR*
' *AT ALL, but always speak the Truth. He,*
' *that is, Christ, hath thus commanded,*
' *SWEAR NOT AT ALL ; but let*
' *your YEA be YEA, and your NAY,*
' *NAY,*

‘ *NAY*; and what is more than these is of
Euseb. lib. 4. ‘ Evil. See his Praise and Martyrdom in
cap. 10. Eusebius, soon after Polycarpus.

Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. 5. c. 1.

XXXIII. ‘ Under the same Emperor
 ‘ (says *Eusebius*) suffered also *Ponticus*, of
 ‘ Fifteen Years of Age, and *Blandina*, a
 ‘ Virgin, with all kind of bitter Torments;
 ‘ the Tormentors now and then urging
 ‘ them to Swear, which they constantly
 ‘ Refused.

Euseb. ibid. lib. 6. cap. 4.

XXXIV. And in the next Emperor’s
 Reign, *Basilides*, a Souldier of Authority
 amongst the Hoast, being appointed to lead
Potamiena to Execution, and by her con-
 vinced of the Truth in Christ, was after a
 while required to Swear; But he affirmed
 plainly, ‘ *It was not lawful for him to Swear*;
 ‘ for (said he) *I am a Christian*. He did
 not lay the Unlawfulness upon that
 Oath, but upon *Swearing at all*. The Hi-
 story only says, His Companions would
 have him swear upon some occasion or o-
 ther, not mentioning by what; His An-
 swer was, *It is Unlawful for me to Swear*;
 and why? because, saith he, *I am a Chri-*
stian: The Consequence is plain *Christians*
 took no Oaths; therefore not their
 Oaths.

*Tertul. Apol. pro Christianis advers.
gent. cap. 32.*

XXXV. In the same Emperor's Reign lived *Tertullian*, a strict and learned Man, Tertullian was a Lawyer, Son to a Centurion of Proconsular Dignity. See his Life. who wrote a very notable *Apology* for the *Christians*, wherein he answers the Objection of the *Heathen*, who accused them of not being Well-wishers to the Emperor, nor *Cæsar's* Friends, in that they refused to Sacrifice and Swear by the *Genius*, *Fortune* and *Health* of the *Emperor*, (we begin with this, because it is urged by some against us) saith he, 'We do Swear, as not by the *Genius* of the *Cæsars*, so by or for their Safety, which is more August than all *Genius's* or *Petty Gods*; for we reverently look up unto the Judgment of God in the *Emperors*, who hath set them over the *Nations*; and we know that to be in them which God wills, and what God wills, that we will to be safe, (that God save it) Hoc salvum esse volumus & pro magno id juramento habemus; i. e. And that we account for a great Oath, or that we have instead of a great Oath; namely, our Well-wishing to *Cæsar*: the thing that was desired, the Substance of the Oath; that Oath which the *Pythagoreans* said was in all reasonable Creatures, viz. a full Resolution of Mind not to transgress the Law of God, which *Tertullian* saith here they had Respect to; That Oath which a Just Man sweareth by his Deeds, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* speaketh. In like manner *Tertullian* says to *Scapula*, Rigaltius adds I will speak plainly, that the Emperor is Lord, but after the common manner. *Tertullian ad Scap. c. 1, 2.*

We

' We do Sacrifice for the Health of the
 ' Emperor, but that way that God pleases,
Apol. c. 33. ' by pure Prayer ; so says he, Here we do
 ' swear by the Health of the Emperor,
 ' *by willing his Health ; and I do work for the*
 ' *Health of the Emperor ; for I commend him*
 ' *to God.* § I do offer ' Otherwise, if we take the Words
 Sacrifice by ' of this *Doctor* strictly and properly, who in
 Prayer, c. 30. writing is *difficult*, as *Scultetus* notes ; and
 obscure, as *Lactantius* says, we shall both
 cross the Scope of the Place, and accuse
 him and the Primitive *Christians* and *Mar-*
tys of his time, *not only of Swearing, but*
Sacrificing for the Health of the Emperor ;
 neither of which do we ever read they did,
 nor as much as offered to do, had they,
 doubtless we should have heard of some *Re-*
lease or *Favour* shown them on that Condes-
 cension : Besides we shall also make him to
 contradict himself (which *Scultetus* accuses
 him not of, in this) For in his Book *de*
Idololatria, he speaks without any Obscu-
 rity ; saying, ' *I speak not of Perjury, seeing*
 ' *it is not Lawful to Swear.* And in Chap.
 23. he proves, ' That he, which signs a Bill
 ' of Security containing and confirmed by
 ' an Oath, is guilty of Swearing, as if he
 ' had spoken it, and transgresses *Christ's*
 ' *Command, who hath prescribed not to Swear.*
 He is before speaking of the Idolatry, *Chri-*
stians are obnoxious to in regard of Employ-
 ments, as *School-masters* by reason of *Hea-*
thenish Books and Customs ; ' and *Merchants*
 ' or

Tertul. de I-
dololatria. c.
 11.

' or *Traffiquers* of *Covetuousness* and *Lying*;
 ' not to speak of *Forswearing*, saith he, *SEE-*
 ' *ING IT IS NOT LAWFUL SO MUCH*
 ' *AS TO SWEAR* ; which if any should
 ' do, he should surely be the *Servant* of Co-
 ' vetuousness, in undertaking an unlawful
 ' Practice for *Gain*, as he says, *Lying* was ;
 ' but if they should also *Forswear*, so add-
 ' ing *Swearing* to *Lying*, that should be a
 ' *Servant of Servants to Covetuousness*, that
 ' is *Idolatry* : Which if *Christians* had
 committed indeed, it is unlikely that *Tertullian*
 would have made such a slight and
 and short *Preterition* with a *Sentence* of
Eight Words. And further observe, that
 both *Tertullian* and the *Martyrs* make use
 of the most *Universal Proof*, to make their
Testimony for *God* full and compleat. And
 though their *Enemies Tryal* of them were
 short of *Proving* them *Christians*, and dis-
 tinguishing them from *Jews* ; yet in the
Wisdom of *God*, their *Answer* and *Argu-*
ment being *General* and *Christian*, inclu-
 ding the *Special* and *Jewish*, proves them
 not only true *Jews*, who were forbidden by
God to *Forswear*, or to *Swear* by *Idols* ;
 but true *Christians*, not to *Swear*, because it
 was unlawful ; for *Christ* had forbidden it :
 And as his *Argument* in the *Apology* afore-
 said, was, *It is Unlawful to Swear*, much
 more to *Forswear* ; so here, *Christ* (saith he)
 hath prescribed not to *Swear*, then sure not
 to *Swear* and subscribe *Gentile Oaths*. So

Basilides,

Basilides, Because I am a Christian, it is not lawful for me to swear; then not your Oath: this is the just Sense and Consequence of it. And said Polycarp, I would have thee to know, that I am a Christian, and the Doctrine thereof, if thou wilt appoint a Time, I shall teach thee, (that is, not to swear) therefore it is in vain for thee to bid me Swear, and defie Christ: So Blandina and Ponticus were urged to Swear, (by what it is not said, and it matters not) but in vain; for they were Christians: We do not read that any used the Jewish Argument, the old Commandment, Thou shalt not Swear by Idols; but the Christian Argument, the new Commandment, It is not lawful to Swear, Christ forbid it, I am a Christian, &c.

And to this Purpose speaks *Le Prieur* on this place of *Tertullian*, in his Annotations (which the Publishers desired because of his Obscurity; see their Preface) ‘*Although,*’ says he, *the Christians did believe that * All Swearing was forbidden them, they before all Oaths were aware of Swearing by the Genius, or Fortune of the Prince.* Here he confesses they were aware of *All Swearing*, much more that which was never lawful, to wit, *Swearing by Idols*. And thereupon he brings the Example of *Polycarpus*: But if of all Oaths, then of Swearing by the Health of the Emperor; for that was an Oath. And this *African* Writer’s intricate Sense (as the Publisher’s Terms are) must needs

* It is confessed by *le Prieur*, that the Christians did deny all Swearing.

needs be in this as in the other, all along mystical : and as he says a little before, *I offer a Sacrifice (oratione) by Prayer* ; so going along he says, *We swear*, juramus, i. e. *jure oramus* ; for so Bruno and Cassiodorus derive the Word, *Jurare dictum est, quasi justè orare, hoc est, justè loqui.*

Bruno and Cassiodorus on Psalm 14. and Psalm 61.

Again, Ps. 61. ' They swear in God, or to God, or by God, who promise an inviolable Obedience of Mind to him. ' *Jurare* to swear (saith he) is, *jure orare*, to speak Equity, that he will not decline to another Party, from what he hath promised. Again, Here Swearing is firmly in mind to resolve to fulfil the good Purpose.

This Cassiodorus was a Roman Senator and Counsellor of Theodoricus, about the Year 490.

And that this must be *Tertullian's* Sense, not only the Scope, (for which see *Sculetus* on the Place) but his Explanation of it, by *willing what God wills, and that to be to them for a great Oath* ; plainly declares to sagacious Readers, and such *Tertullian's African* Speech requires, as *Rigaltius* says of his Writings, which have been * altered of them that could not comprehend them. But it is likely that a Man so severe, that condemned the very subscribing of a Writing wherein an Oath was contained, and for this Reason, *because Christ forbade to Swear at all* ; and thought it needless to speak of Perjury, *because it was not lawful to swear*, should yet allow it in himself and others to swear even by that which was not God ? Besides, *Suarez* reckons him amongst

* There are about 2000 Corrections in *Tertullian's Works*

Suarez. de Juram. c. 2.

those Fathers, who were more especially against Swearing.

Thus are the Conspirers against this part of the Doctrine of Christ, and his Apostles, Primitive Fathers and Martyrs, forc'd out of that Sanctuary they betook themselves to, in the Sentence of this intricate Doctor.

Clem. Alex. Strom. l. 7.

XXXVI. *Clemens Alexandrinus*, his Contemporary, famous for Learning and Strict Living, to help him in his Mystical Meaning of an Oath, says, ' He who is ' once a Believer, why should he make ' himself an * Unbeliever, as that he hath ' also need to Swear, and doth not so lead ' his life, that the same (to wit, his Life) ' be a firm and definite Oath, and shew the ' Faithfulness of Confession in a constant and ' stable Speech—— Far be it that he who ' is approved and discerned in such Piety, ' should be propense to Lye or to Swear—— ' He who liveth justly, transgressing in no ' thing of these things that should be done, ' the same sweareth truly and holily by his ' Deeds and Works, (Mark how this agrees with *Tertullian's* improper Swearing) ' the Testimony of the Tongue is superfluous to him——It sufficeth to add unto ' his Affirming or Denying this, viz. I ' SPEAK TRULY, that he beget Faith, ' in them who perceive not the Stability of ' his Answer : For it behoveth him, as I ' judge

* Infidelity keeps company with Swearing : And for a Christian to swear, is with *Clem. Alexandrinus* to turn Infidel again.

‘ judge (saith he) to have a Life worthy of
 ‘ Credit (or Faith) among those that are
 ‘ without, that an Oath be not sought from
 ‘ him—— Neither doth he Swear, as be-
 ‘ ing one, who hath *determined to put for his*
 ‘ *Affirming YEA, for his Denying NAY.*

—— ‘ *Where is there any need of an*
 ‘ *Oath to him that so lives, as one that is at-*
 ‘ *tained to the height of Truth?* He there-
 ‘ fore that doth not Swear, is far from For-
 ‘ swearing: He that transgresseth in nothing
 ‘ that is covenanted and agreed, **HE MAY**
 ‘ **NEVER SWEAR.**

—— ‘ Seeing he is fully perswaded that
 ‘ God is every where, and is ashamed not
 ‘ to speak Truth, and professeth that it is a
 ‘ thing unbeseeming, and unworthy for him
 ‘ to speak False; he is content with this,
 ‘ that God and his own Conscience know
 ‘ it, and therefore he doth not Lye, nor do
 ‘ any thing besides or against what is co-
 ‘ venanted and agreed: *By that means he*
 ‘ *neither sweareth, if he be asked; nor de-*
 ‘ *nyes, so as to speak false, though he dye upon*
 ‘ *the Rack for it.*

Likewise in his 5th, 7th and 8th Books
 of *Strom.* also in his 3d Book of his *Peda-*
gogue with *Gentianus Hervetus's* Notes on it,
 ‘ where he forbids to set Two Prices, and com-
 ‘ mands but one single one, and to speak Truth
 ‘ **WITHOUT** an Oath, &c.

Origen in *Matth. Tract. 25.*

XXXVII. Origen, his Successor, a Man of equal Fame for Learning and Piety, succeeds him also in this Testimony concerning Swearing: 'Because, saith he, the Jews have a Custom to swear by Heaven; to the fore-going (Prohibition) Christ added this also to reprove them, because they more easily swore by Heaven than by God; because he deals alike unreasonably, who sweareth by HEAVEN, as he that swears by the TEMPLE, or by the ALTAR, in that who sweareth by Heaven, seemeth to swear by Him that sitteth in that Throne, and doth not escape Danger, as he thinks, because he sweareth not by God himself, but by the Throne of God: And these things he speaks to the Jews, forbidding them to give heed to the Traditions of the Pharisees; * otherwise, before, HE MANIFESTLY FORBAD TO SWEAR AT ALL.

He makes two Prohibitions, as we do: 1. Swear not by God. 2. by no Creatures.

Ibid. Tract.

35.
Mat. 26.

Numb. 5. 19.

1 King. 22.
16.

'The Chief Priest said unto him, I adjure thee by the Living God, that thou tell us if thou be the Christ the Son of God.

'In the Law we find the Use of Adjuring; The Priest shall adjure the Woman with the Adjurations of this Curse.

Also Ahab said unto Michæas, I adjure thee that thou tell me the Truth in the Name of the Lord. The King adjured the Prophet, not by Command of the Law, but by

‘ by his own Will. And now the Priest
 ‘ adjures Jesus by the Living God. But I
 ‘ account that a Man that will live accor-
 ‘ ding to the Gospel, **MUST NOT AD-**
 ‘ **JURE ANOTHER:** *For it is even like*
 ‘ *that which the Lord himself forbids in the*
 ‘ *Gospel, BUT I SAY UNTO YOU,*
 ‘ **SWEAR NOT AT ALL.** For if it
 ‘ be not lawful to Swear, as to the Gospel-
 ‘ Command of Christ, *it is also true, that*
 ‘ *it is not lawful to Adjure another, or com-*
 ‘ *pel him to swear.*

*Origen against
 all Swearing
 with us; and
 Compelling.*

Huetius upon him addeth, that Athana-
sius, Chrysostom, Epiphanius, Hilary and ma-
ny more were of the same mind with him :
and if so we may without Offence add, up-
on that respect our Superiours seem to carry
to their Names, that it must needs be very
remote from the Doctrine of the ancient
Church, to fine, imprison and bitterly treat
those, that for Conscience of that Gospel-Com-
mand do scruple an Oath in this Age.

If thou wilt return, *O Israel,* saith the Lord, and put away thy Abominations, then shalt thou not remove. And thou shalt swear the Lord liveth in Truth, and Judgment, and Righteousness.

*Origen on Jer
 4. 1, 2.*

Origen here tells us, ‘ That this is a Re-
 ‘ proof of them that did not swear in Judg-
 ‘ ment, but without Judgment : Howbeit
 ‘ we know (saith he) that the Lord said un-
 ‘ to his Disciples, *But I say unto you,*
 ‘ **SWEAR NOT AT ALL.** Perhaps
 ‘ formerly

'formerly it behoved them to Swear in
 'Truth, Judgment and Righteousness;
 'that after any had given Proof of his In-
 'tegrity, he might be thought worthy of
 'being believed *WITHOUT ANY OATH*
 'AT ALL. But once having YEA, he
 'needs no Witness that it is YEA; and
 'having NAY, he needs no other Evidence
 'to prove that it is NAY.

Thus doth *Origen* prefer and extol Evan-
 gelical Verity, wrapt up in solemn *Yea* or
Nay, above the Swearing that was in Truth,
 Judgment and Righteousness under the
 Dispensation of the Law.

Socrates Scholast. lib. 4. cap. 22. of
 his Ecclesiastical History.

XXXVIII. *Gregory Thaumaturgus*, so
 called from his working of Miracles, on *Ec-
 cles.* lib. 46. cap. 8. saith, 'It is meet to
 'give diligent heed to the Words of the King,
 'and to flee an Oath by all means, especially
 'that which is taken in the Name of God.
 See his great Praise, his Works and Mi-
 racles.

Cyprian Lib. 3. Testim. 3d *Quirin.*

XXXIX. *Cyprian*, a famous Father,
 and faithful Martyr (who lived about the
 middle of the Age, in the beginning of
 which *Origen* flourished) in his Third Book
 of Testimonies to *Quirinus*, 'Who hath
 'desired me (saith *Cyprian*) to draw out of
 'the

' the Holy Scriptures certain Heads, belonging to the Religious Discipline of our Sect. (for so he calleth his own, the Christian Religion) His Twelfth Head amongst them is, ' Not to Swear.

Again, Writing of Pastors and Teachers, he biddeth them, *' Remember what the Lord taught, and said, Let your saying be Yea, Yea ; and Nay, Nay.* Cypr. Epist. ad Corn. n. 5.

In another place he saith, *' It is unlawful for any man to compel another to take an Oath.* Cyprian de Mortal,

Hitherto the *Christians*, being under most cruel Sufferings, generally kept faithful to the Command of Christ in this Point ; and so we find very little in their Writings about it besides a simple and bare asserting of it as the Doctrine of Christ, *not to swear at all*, as well as it was of Moses, *not to swear falsely or vainly* ; for more was no way needful, in that it was not Contested, but universally so Received. But after that *Christian* Emperors had engaged themselves in Parties, then it seems many out of Flattery, and to engage them to their Sect, took Liberty to Swear, even by the Health of the Emperor, as is objected against us by some out of *Eusebius* ; but such he did not account Religious ; neither that a Religious Part so to do, much less an *August* Act ; and least of all, a most *August* Act of Divine Worship, as some would have it, see-

*Euseb. apud
Stob. de Jure-
jur. c. 37.*

ing *Stobæus* observes from him, That where-
as many exhorted that they be honest and
faithful in an Oath, *he, for his part, esteem-*
ed it not the Part of a Religious Man, not
to avoid even Swearing it self. And we be-
lieve it will be an hard Matter to find any
in the *Greek Church*, especially for the first
Three Hundred Years, that would allow
Swearing so large a place in Sacred Things,
yea, or in later Ages either, even in the
Latin Church; nay, of those who have al-
lowed it in some Cases, many or most of
them have denyed it any Place at all in the
Worship of God, as of it self, accounting
it an *Abatement*, rather than an *Advance-*
ment to Christianity. which no part of the
true Worship of God can be. But some
perhaps taking of *Tertullian's* word *Augusti-*
or, or more *August*, (which he says, the
Safety of the Emperor is, in comparison of
all the *Genius's*) to be the highest Act of
God's Worship, they would have us Swear
by that, after the Example of those menti-
oned in some *Christian Emperors* Times.
Tertullian's Sense we shall easily grant; for
it is so, and we do so, in that we commend
our Prince and Governours to God, to God
only, with earnest and sincere Desires for
his and their Safety, above all such *Geni-*
us's, as *Tertullian* calls *Damonia*. But we
justly deny upon the score of what we have
made appear to the contrary, even from
Tertullian himself, and others, That he, or
the

the *Christians* in his Time, or for Two Hundred Years before, or an Hundred Years after, did swear, as some would have us, *least of all as a most August Act of the Worship of God, without which all others are unacceptable* ; or that those who did Swear afterwards were the most Religious ; seeing *Ensebius* esteems otherwise, and not he only, but also those very Devout Men that we have already produced, besides many which might and may be mentioned : For, all that we have yet met with in those times, that speak of it, speak against it ; and of the following Times Men of greatest Renown and Authority labour'd with all Earnestness to expel *Oaths* the Society of *Christians*, and cure them of that Distemper by inculcating the Doctrine of Integrity, that needs no Oath ; proving by Holy Scripture, that it was the plain and absolute Law of Christ, that *Christians ought not to swear at all* ; and by other Arguments, that the Original of Oaths was neither from God, nor good Men : But they crept into Use through the Corruption of Times, and meer Carelessness of Governments ; for when they could not trust one another, they called their Gods to witness ; but God separating *Abraham* and his Posterity from among them to himself, the better to draw them from Idols, commanded them to swear by him only : as much as if he would have said ; If you will Swear, let it be by
my

my Name rather than Idols, that so you may, though it be after a mean manner, acknowledge a real Deity, the Only Lord of all : But how long was this Condescension to last ? But till the Fulness of Time came ; That with other Permissions, removed all Swearing, Christ bringing men to the Truth in the Inward Parts, as in the Beginning, before Swearing was in being ; *for from the Beginning it was not so.*

But to shew what other *Fathers* Reasons and Testimonies against this *Heathenish* and *Jewish* Usage, indeed Bondage, were at the coming in of the Apostacy, we shall begin with *Athanasius*, a man that was in great Renown in the Days of *Constantine* the Great, and whose Creed is the Faith and Test of *Christendom* at this day.

Athanasius on the Passion of Christ.

XL. ‘ The Evangelical Sentence of the
 ‘ Lord is, *Let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay,*
 ‘ *Nay* : Thus far we, who are in Christ, may
 ‘ confirm our Words with Asseverations,
 ‘ and with *no further Progress let us flee to*
 ‘ *or approach Oaths*, that we alledge not
 ‘ God for Witness for Corruptible Mo-
 ‘ ney’s sake, especially since *Moses* so sets
 ‘ down the Law ; *Thou shalt not take the*
 ‘ *Name of the Lord thy God in a vain thing.*
 ‘ For if any one is plainly worthy to name
 ‘ God, he is also worthy of Belief ; For,
 ‘ whosoever

' whosoever is meet for greater things, he
 ' will be much more fit for less : On the
 ' contrary, if he be not worthy Belief, that
 ' he may be credited without an Oath,
 ' *surely he is not one, that is worthy to name*
 ' *God.* If he be not faithful in Word, how
 ' will God by any means be the Witness of
 ' an Oath for him, who is destitute of Faith,
 ' to which God hath Respect. ' Again,
 ' *The Lord is nigh to all that call upon him*
 ' *in Truth* ; by which alone the Lord can
 ' be called upon : wherefore why do they
 ' swear by God, *who are not trusted even in*
 ' *small Matters* ? Otherwise an Oath is a
 ' Testimony of Truth, and not a Judge of
 ' Businesses, sith men do swear, not that
 ' they may signify Businesses, but that they
 ' may confirm the Truth ; and that they
 ' may shew, that those things which they
 ' produce, are without Lying : *If therefore*
 ' *he that swears, hath Faith and Truth* ;
 ' **WHAT USE IS THERE OF AN**
 ' **OATH ?** But if he hath no Faith nor
 ' Truth, why do we undertake such an Im-
 ' piety, that for *poor silly Men, and those*
 ' *mortal too; we call to Witness GOD, that*
 ' *is above Men* ? For if it be a base part
 ' to call to witness an Earthly King to the
 ' lowest Judicatures, as one that is greater
 ' than both Actors and Judges ; *why do we*
 ' *cite Him, that is Uncreated to created things,*
 ' and make God to be despised of Men ?
 ' **WITHOUT**, that exceeds all Iniquity and

Athanasius his
 Abhorrence
 and Derision
 of Oaths.

Athanasius
 his Reason
 and Dislike of
 Oaths.

' Auda-

' Audaciousness : What then is to be done?
 ' NO MORE, *but that our YEA be*
 ' YEA, and our NAY be NAY ; and in
 ' short, THAT WE DO NOT LYE.
 ' But if we shall seem to speak Truth, and
 ' imitate the true God, some perchance
 ' may thus contradict.

Object.

' If an Oath be forbidden to Men, and
 ' a man imitates God in not Swearing, how
 ' is it that God is related in the Holy Scrip-
 ' tures to *swear* ? For he swore to *Abra-*
 ' *ham*, as *Moses* witnesseth : And it is writ-
 ' ten in the *Psalms*, *The Lord swore, and will*
 ' *not repent*, &c. For these things seem to
 ' be repugnant to the former ; and that
 ' thereby there is permitted to men a Li-
 ' berty of Swearing.

Ans.

' But this is not so, nor can any think so:
 ' For God sweareth by none ; for how can
 ' he, seeing he is Lord and Maker of all
 ' things ? But if any thing, this must be
 ' said, that *His Word is an Oath*, inducing
 ' *the Hearers by a sure Faithfulness, that*
 ' *what he promiseth and speaketh, shall cer-*
 ' *tainly be effected ; sith God sweareth not as*
 ' *Man, but his Word to us is as an Oath for Ve-*
 ' *rity*. And speaking to men, he is said to
 ' swear : And this also the Saints do ut-
 ' ter after the manner of Men ; that as they
 ' themselves speaking would have Credit to
 ' be given them, so likewise they them-
 ' selves should give Credit to God : For, as
 ' a Man's Word confirmeth an Oath, so
 ' also

' also those things that God speaketh, be-
 ' cause of the Firmness and Immutability of
 ' his Will *are to be reputed Oaths.* The
 ' same also that is there written, confirmeth
 ' my Saying, *For the Lord hath sworn, and*
 ' *will not repent* ; as a thing not to be re-
 ' tracted by Repenting, but certainly to be
 ' effected, *according to the Engagement of an*
 ' *Oath.* This also God doth declare in Ge-
 ' nesis, saying, *I have sworn by my self :*
 ' But that is *not an Oath* ; for he swore not
 ' by *another*, which is proper for an *Oath*,
 ' but by *himself*, which contains not the
 ' Estimation of an *Oath.* But this is done
 ' *that the sureness of his Promise may appear* ;
 ' and how confidently that ought to be be-
 ' lieved which is spoken. That sweet
 ' *Psalmist* will witness for me in his Psalm,
 ' calling God to mind, when he saith, *Where*
 ' *are thy ancient Mercies, O Lord, which thou*
 ' *swarest to David thy Servant, in (or by) thy*
 ' *Truth?* For God sweareth not by his
 ' Truth ; But because he, who is *True*,
 ' speaketh in his Word, That to men is for
 ' an *Oath* unto Belief. So God doth not
 ' swear after the manner of Men : neither
 ' must we be induced thereby to take *Oaths* ;
 ' but let us so Say, and so Do, and so ap-
 ' prove our selves in Saying and Doing, that
 ' we need not an *Oath* for the Hearer ; and
 ' that our Words of themselves may have
 ' the Testimony of Truth ; For by that way
 ' we shall plainly imitate God.

Athanisus
 will not have
 it, that God e-
 ver swore, pro-
 perly & strict-
 ly taken, only
 in a way of
 speaking, ha-
 ving the Truth
 and Immuta-
 bility of the
 truest & great-
 est Oath.

Hilary on Mat. 5. 34.

XLI. *Hilary*, a Father very Famous in the days of *Constantius*, Son to *Constantine* (but an *Arrian*, which was worse, a Persecutor, so that this *Hilary* was banished) in his Commentary on those words in *Matthew*, *Ye have heard that it was said to them of old, Thou shalt not Forswear thy self, &c.* thus expresseth himself, ‘ The Law set a Penalty
 ‘ for Perjury, that the Conscience of Religion or Fear of an Oath might restrain the
 ‘ Deceitfulness of Minds ; for the rude and
 ‘ insolent People made frequent mention of
 ‘ their God by a familiar Course of Swearing : But *Faith doth remove the Custom of*
 ‘ *an Oath*, making the Busineses of our Life
 ‘ to be determined in Truth, and laying aside the affecting to deceive ; prescribing
 ‘ the Simplicity of Speaking and Hearing,
 ‘ that what WAS, WAS ; what WAS
 ‘ NOT, WAS NOT ; that the Business
 ‘ of Deceiving might be apparent between
 ‘ IT IS, and IT IS NOT ; and what
 ‘ is more, is all of Evil : *For what is, it is*
 ‘ *it’s Property always that so it is ; and what*
 ‘ *is not, it is it’s Nature, that it is not :*
 ‘ *Therefore to them that live in the Simplicity*
 ‘ *of Faith, there is no NEED of the Religion*
 ‘ *(or Superstition) of an OATH ; with*
 ‘ *whom always what is, IS ; what is not,*
 ‘ *IS NOT : And by these both all their*
 ‘ *Words and Deeds are in Truth.* Neither
 ‘ by

‘by Heaven] God not only suffers us not to
 ‘make Oaths to God, because all the Truth of
 ‘God is to be held in the Simplicity of our
 ‘Word and Deed ; but also condemneth the
 ‘Superstition of old Disobedience, &c.

Suarez. de Juram. l. 1. c. 1, 2.

XLII. The next Testimony we shall pitch upon in Confirmation of our Reasons, and the Sense we take our Master’s Precept in, *Swear not at all*, is afforded us out of the *Apostolical Institutions* ascribed to *Clemens Romanus*, reported by Suarez in his Book *de Juramentis*, ‘Our Master (saith *Clemens*) hath commanded, that we **SHOULD NOT SWEAR**, no, not by the True God; but that our Word should be more credible than an Oath it self. Which is a plain Indication of the Apostolical Doctrine to have been the absolute *Prohibition* of Oaths, in that Sense wherein they were only reputed *Lawful*: For if Men ought not to Swear, no, not by the true God; then consequently by no other Oath, as his following words not only imply, but express, viz, ‘That the Word of a Christian should be more credible than an Oath it self. Again, He 1. 6. c. 23. ‘that in the Law established to Swear well, ‘and forbad False Swearing; commanded also **NOT TO SWEAR AT ALL**.

This, if that Clemens, should have been first, because he liv’d in Paul’s time; but we were not willing to begin our Testimonies with a Suspicion; howbeit it is an Ancient Writing.

Orthodoxagrapha, p. 11.

LXIII. There is a Tract call'd, *The Gospel of Nicodemus* : We know it is reputed spurious, but that makes nothing against us ; that disputes the *Author*, and not the *Matter* ; for though *Nicodemus* never wrote such a Book, certain it is that such a Book was written, which is in Favour of *Christianity*, as then received : In the Place cited *Pilate* is made to say, ' *I adjure you by the Health of Cæsar, that these things that you say, &c.* They answer'd, ' *We have a Law not to SWEAR, because it is a Sin.* Whoever wrote it, this Benefit cometh to our Argument, that the *Christians*, at that time, thought an *Oath* a *Sin* ; for it is not to be doubted, but he that gave that Answer, knew it to be *the Doctrine and Practice* of *Christians* ; for he was therein to represent them.

Basilus Magnus on Psalm 14.

XLV. *Basil*, called the Great, another Champion of the like Fame, and in the same time of *Valens*, the Persecuting *Arrian Emperor*, by whom he suffered Imprisonment and Cruel Threatnings (see their Prai-

Socrat. Eccl. ses in *Socrates Scholaasticus*) on the 14th *Pf. Hist. lib. 4. c.* with us the 15th, *He that sweareth, and deceiveth not his Neighbour* ; so *Basil* hath it, and upon it these words :

• Here

‘ Here he seemeth to allow an Oath to a
 ‘ Perfect Man, which in the Gospel is
 ‘ **ALTOGETHER** forbidden; *But I say*
 ‘ *unto you, not to swear at all.*

‘ What shall we say then ?

‘ That every where the Lord, as well in
 ‘ the Old as in the New Law, hath the
 ‘ same Consideration of Commanding ; for
 ‘ desiring to anticipate the Effects of Sins,
 ‘ and prevent them by Diligence, and to
 ‘ extinguish Iniquity at the first beginnings,
 ‘ As the Old Law saith, *Thou shalt not*
 ‘ *commit adultery* ; the Lord saith, *Thou*
 ‘ *shalt not Lust* : The Old Law saith, *Thou*
 ‘ *shalt not Kill* ; the Lord ordaining Perfec-
 ‘ tion, saith, *Thou shalt not be Angry* : So
 ‘ also in this place, the Prophet indeed seem-
 ‘ eth to assent to an Oath ; but the Lord,
 ‘ to take away all Occasion of Perjury,
 ‘ and willing to prevent the Dangers of
 ‘ Swearers, takes away Swearing **ALTO-**
 ‘ **GETHER** : For he names an Oath in
 ‘ many places the immutable and firm Con-
 ‘ stancy of any thing or purpose. *I have*
 ‘ *sworn, and have stedfastly purposed to keep*
 ‘ *the Judgments of thy Righteousness.* Also,
 ‘ *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent.*
 ‘ Not that *David* brought the Lord for a
 ‘ Witness of his Sayings, and to get Belief
 ‘ to his Doubling, but that he confirmed
 ‘ the Grace of his Profession by an Immu-
 ‘ table and firm Decree : so also he could
 ‘ have said here, that is, *He that sweareth,*

' and deceiveth not his Neighbour, that it may
 ' agree with the Saying of our Saviour, *Let*
 ' *your Word be YEA, YEA; NAY, NAY.*
 ' To things that are, thou may'st affirm
 ' and assent; but of things that are not, al-
 ' though all men urge thee, yet thou may-
 ' est never be drawn by any means to affirm
 ' against the Nature of the Truth: Is the
 ' thing not done, let there be a Denial;
 ' is it done, let it be affirmed *by Word.*
 ' And he that shall not assent to him so affir-
 ' ming, *let him look to it, and feel the Harm*
 ' *of his Unbelief.* It is a base and a very fool-
 ' ish thing to *accuse one's self, as one un-*
 ' *worthy of being believed, and to betake and*
 ' *refer one's self to the Security of an Oath.*
 ' Now, there are some Speeches which have
 ' the Forms of Oaths, and yet are no Oaths
 ' at all, but rather Remedies to perswade;
 ' as Joseph to make the *Egyptian* familiar
 ' with him, swore by the Health of Pha-
 ' roah, (*וַיִּשְׁפָּט בְּרֹאשׁוֹ* live Pharoah.) And the
 ' Apostle, willing to shew his Love to the
 ' Corinthians, said, *By the Glorifying of you,*
 ' *which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord;* For
 ' he did not depart from the Doctrine of the
 ' Gospel, who, by a thing before all most
 ' dear unto him, simply sought Belief to
 ' the Truth. He refused to swear at the
 ' Council of Calcedon: And speaking of Cli-
 ' neas, a Pythagorean, who might have avoid-
 ' ed a Mult of Three Talents, if he would
 ' have sworn, which he rather suffered; saith,

* Pray mark
 where Basil lai-
 eth the Blame,
 if a Word go
 not for an Oath

Joseph swore
 not.

Paul swore not.

Ad Nepotes.

Above 300l.

In keeping these things, he seems to have heard that Command concerning an Oath that is forbidden us. *And he upbraided the Christians of his time with it, that would swear.*

This *Basil* the Great, in his 29th Canon to *Amphilochius*, writes thus, ' Because an Oath is **ALTOGETHER FORBIDDEN**, such an one as is taken to an Evil Purpose, is much more to be condemned— Again, ' If an Oath, simply as such, be prohibited, of greater Reason when it is to effect some Mischievous End—— The Cure consisteth in a twofold Admonition; First, **NOT TO SWEAR**; Secondly, **SUPPRESS THE FORM OF OATHS.**

Basil Mag. Can. 29.
Basil's Expedi- ent. to remove Oaths.

Blastaris Syntagma Tit. E. c. 32.

XLV. There was an ancient Law made to this effect, ' It is **FORBIDDEN** to all, from the Bishop and Clergy-Men to the Readers, to **TAKE ANY OATH AT ALL.**

Blastaris also brings in this Objection. But since those are punished who swear falsely, and those are passed by who swear well, some may say, *Therefore it is permitted to swear.* To which he answers, ' But where shall we dispose, or how shall we dispense with the Evangelical Precept in the Gospel, **THAT FORBIDS TAKING ANY OATH AT ALL?** Adding, ' But I believe that the Gospel endeavoured to root out

The Reason of prohibiting Oaths.

‘ out that Wicked Stem (as I may say)
 ‘ which is in sinful men, and *FOR THAT*
 ‘ *CAUSE PROHIBITED AN OATH*,
 ‘ which is as the Door or In-let to Perjury.

Gregor. Nyssenus on Cant. orat. 13.

XLVI. *Gregory Nyssenus* Brother to Basil, spoaken of by *Socrates Scholasticus* in the same place, and in lib. 5. cap. 9. His Works are Famous: And in his Explanation on the *Canticles*, bestows this Testimony upon us: ‘ He, who by *Moses* established the Beginnings of the Law, by himself fulfilled all the Law and the Prophets, as he saith in the *Evangels*: ‘ *came not to destroy the Law, but fulfil it*; ‘ who taking away Anger, *abolisheth Killing* ‘ also; and together with Lust, *took away* ‘ *Adultery*. He also casts out of Men’s ‘ Lives accursed Perjuries, whilst by the *Pro-* ‘ *hibition of an Oath, he has put in his Sith,* ‘ *as it were to Security*: For it cannot be, ‘ that any should not keep an Oath, when ‘ there is no Oath; Therefore saith he, *You* ‘ *have heard, that it was said to them of old* ‘ *time, Thou shalt not Forswear, but shalt* ‘ *render to the Lord thy Oaths*; but I say un- ‘ to you, *SWEAR NOT AT ALL*, nei- ‘ ther by Heaven, &c. but let your *YEA* be ‘ *YEA*, and your *NAY, NAY*; for what- ‘ soever is more, is of the Devil. Thus do they mostly end; which shows how they understood Christ’s Words.

Greg.

Greg. Nazianz. in his Dialogue against Swearing, Jamb. 20.

XLVII. *Gregory Nazianzen*, a great man in the Church, also speaketh to the same Purpose in his Dialogue against Swearing, saying, ' *B. What Oath dost thou leave to us?* ' *A. I wish I might leave none, and that there were never any more. But thou sayest, We have heard that God himself sometimes swore: The Holy Scriptures record that; but is there any thing better than God; Surely nothing is found better than He: If therefore nothing be better than He, it should follow that he never swears. B. Why therefore do they record that He swore? A. When God saith any thing, that is the Oath of God. B. And how doth he swear by himself? A. How! He should not at all be God, if he should lye. B. Thou speakest strangely! A. No wonder; that is the nature of God peculiarly, that he cannot lye: There is none that can deny this. B. But what wilt thou say to me of the old Covenant? Surely it doth not prohibit an Oath, but requires a true one? A. No Wonder: At that time only it was prescribed in the Law concerning Murder; but now it is not lawful for any Cause so much as to smite or beat: then the End of an Evil deed only came into Judgment, but now that also which moveth to the End. This is my Judgment;*

Paul did not
Swear.

See Tertullian
before, to
whom this a-
grees.

Mark how
Gregor. Naz.
speaks of the
Scripture, in
comparison of
God's Omni-
presence with
the Mind and
the Sense, and
Regard man
ought to have
of it.

ment : for now we have made a long Pro-
gress ; wherefore a Wise Man will abstain
from Oaths. B. *What then ? Dost thou*
give to some as Infants a kind of first Food,
that they may at length receive a succeeding
kind of Meat ? A. Thou judgest right and
wisely. B. *But Paul also swore, as they say ?*
A. Who said so ? Oh, what a vain Jan-
gler was he that said it ! Quoth he, *God*
is my Witness, and God knoweth : Those
words are not an Oath, but a certain Al-
severation in such great things, constant
and inviolable. B. *Wilt thou allow the*
same also to me ? A. I wish, that to thy
Power thou wouldest plainly become a
Paul, and so thou wouldest have a Right
Rule of thine Actions. B. *What if I use*
an Oath unwillingly, but to free me from
Danger ? A. Let another allow thee
that. B. *What if an Oath be written, and*
not pronounced with the Voice ? A. And
what's the meaning of a Writing ? Sure-
ly amongst all other Obligations, a Wri-
ting doth more bind and oblige us. B.
What if we be drawn by Necessity to give an
Oath ? A. Why didst thou not rather
Dye ? For surely thou shouldst rather Dye
than do that. B. *What if the Books of the*
Holy Scriptures be not used ? A. What ! Is
Religion placed in a * Leaf ? Is God ab-
sent by this means ? It is evident that thou
fearest (*Paper, or*) Parchment, and I fear
God more : This is a frequent Disease to
many,

' many, and usual ; neither is it otherwise
 ' than if a Man beat the Master, and dis-
 ' grace him, and make his Servant a Free-
 ' man, and do him Honour (*What a notable*
 ' *Reproach should that be*) or as if a Man
 ' should preserve the King's Image, and in
 ' the mean time destroy the King. B. *It*
 ' *is even as thou sayest : But I would have thee*
 ' *say what is more to be shewn.* A. Many
 ' use to say, I swore with my Tongue, but
 ' my Mind is free from Swearing. Any
 ' thing may be more cunningly excused than
 ' an Oath : Let him not suffer any Colour
 ' to be made for himself ; for this is an
 ' Oath : And how much Mischief tell me, *Greg. Naz.*
 ' comes from Deceit it self ? Let us see *his Account of*
 ' what an Oath is : Nothing else but the *an Oath.*
 ' very Meaning (*or Mind*) of those things
 ' which we set down—— Thou wouldst
 ' have me add what remains. Surely an
 ' Oath is nothing else, but a certain Con-
 ' summation as it were of Mischiefs : O
 ' Dangerous Flame ! B. *But Plato doth*
 ' *some such thing : He is Religiously aware,*
 ' *that he swear not by any God.* A. Truly I
 ' know what thou art about to say : There
 ' was a certain *Plane-Tree*, by which alone
 ' he made Oath : But he did not swear
 ' rightly, neither by that ; For he had an
 ' Understanding in something ; but what a
 ' Just and Religious Oath should be, that he
 ' could not understand. And what was this
 ' tell me now ? *A certain Shadow of an*

' Oath ; a Declaration without a Name ; an
 ' Oath, No-Oath ; as the *Philosophers* swore by
 ' a strange and unknown God. Lastly, it
 ' is nothing else, but to make Oath by any
 ' thing. Here let our Speech be at an end.
 ' Thou threatnest that thou wilt leave me a-
 ' thirst sooner than I would. *A.* If an
 ' Oath seem a small thing to thee, truly I
 ' cannot commend thee : But if it is, as it
 ' is in the number of horrible things, I will
 ' also dare to produce a mighty thing : I do
 ' adjure by a very Oath it self, that thou
 ' abstain from, and beware of Oaths, and
 ' thou hast the Victory. *B.* *I wish I had.*
 ' What fruit gets he that often sweareth ?
 ' Laughter. What more ? That when he
 ' speaks Truth, he shall not be believed.

Greg. Naz.
on Cant. Hom
 18.

In another place he saith, ' That to swear
 ' by Creatures, is to swear with regard to
 ' God himself ; so Christ himself saith, *Mat.*
 ' 5. 35. and chap. 23. 16, 23.

Cæsarius, Numb. 43.

XLVIII. *Cæsarius*, Brother to *Gregory*
Nazianzen, in his spiritual Sentences hath
 this Sentence, ' *Flee ALL Swearing, or*
 ' *EVERY Oath* : How then shall we get
 ' Belief ? As well by Speech as by virtuous
 ' Actions and Carriages, that gain Belief
 ' to our Speech. Perjury is a Denying of
 ' God : What need of God in this Matter ?
 ' *Interpose and put in ure thy Actions.*

Epiphan.

Epiphanius adv. Heres. lib. 1.

ord. 19. § 6.

XLIX. *Epiphanius*, whom *Socrates Scholasticus*, lib 6. cap. 9. calls a Man of great Fame and Renown, and a Virtuous and Godly Person; in his first Book against Heresies (not accounting Denying to Swear an Heresie, but rather the contrary, as may appear by his Words, which are these) ‘ In the Law, as well as the Gospel, it is commanded not to use another Name in Swearing: but in the Gospel he commanded not to Swear, neither by Heaven nor Earth, nor other Oath, but let Yea, Yea; Nay, Nay; **BE AS AN OATH**, as *Petavius* translates it) ‘ for what is more than these is of Evil. Therefore I suppose that the Lord ordained concerning this, because of some mens Allegations, that would swear by other Names; and first, that we must not swear, no, not by the Lord himself, nor by any other Oath; for it is an Evil thing to swear at all. Therefore he is Evil that compels not only to swear by God, but by other things, &c.

Ambros. de Virgin. lib. 3.

L. *Ambrose*, soon after, being a Layman or Citizen of *Milan*, was by the People against his Will, chosen Bishop of that City, for his great Worth and Godliness, whose Writings are of great Account;
And

And speaking of the Inconveniency occasioned by an Oath, saith, ' Wherefore not
' without Cause doth the Lord in the Gos-
' pel command not to Swear, that there
' may be *no Cause of Forswearing* that there
' may be *no Necessity of Offending*.

Exhortat. ad
Virgin.

' He that sweareth not, certainly he ne-
' ver Forsweareth; but he that Sweareth,
' sometimes he must needs fall into Perjury,
' because all Men are subject to Lye. Do
' not therefore Swear, lest thou beginnest to
' Forswear.

Ambrose on
Mat. 5.
He was for
* Inspiration
and Perfection.

' Therefore the Lord, who came to teach
' the little Ones, to * INSPIRE Novices,
' to confirm the * Perfect, saith in the Gos-
' pel, YE MUST NOT SWEAR AT
' ALL; because he spoak to the Weak.

' Lastly, He spoak not only to the A-
' postles, but to the Multitude; for he
' would not have thee to Swear, lest thou
' should'st Forswear.

' And he added, *Not to swear, neither by*
' *Heaven, nor by the Earth, &c.* namely by
' those things that are not subject to thy
' Power.

Psalm 109.

' *The Lord Sware, and shall not Repent.*
' He may swear, who cannot repent of his
' Oath: And what did the Lord swear?
' *That Christ is a Priest for ever:* Is that
' Uncertain? Is that Impossible? the Lord
' has sworn. Can it any way be changed?

' Do not therefore use the Example of
' an Oath, because thou hast not Power to
' fulfil an Oath. Also,

Also, in his Commentary on the *Hebrews*, *Ambros. Com.*
 he saith, ' Because Mankind is incredulous, *on Heb. c. 6.*
 ' God condescendeth to us, that even he
 ' sweareth for us.

So that he shews, that not to be an Ar- *Oaths found-*
 gument for Swearing to be desired, seeing *ed on Defect,*
 it is only in Condescension to a Defect; *not to be en-*
 not to be encouraged from it to swear, or to *couraged; then*
 require it. *not to be im-*
posed.

Chrysost. on Gen. hom. 15.

LI. *Chrysostom*, in those days very Fa-
 mous in the Church, and therefore styl'd
 the *Golden Doctor*; in his 15th Homily on
Genesis, saith; ' A Christian must flee Oaths
 ' by all means, hearing the Sentence of
 ' Christ, which saith, *It was said to them of*
 ' *old, Thou shalt not Forswear; But I say*
 ' *unto you, SWEAR NOT AT ALL.*
 ' Let none say therefore, I swear in a Just
 ' Business. IT IS NOT LAWFUL TO
 ' SWEAR: NEITHER IN A JUST
 ' NOR UNJUST THING.

' To swear is of the Devil, seeing Christ *Id. Hom. Ps.*
 ' saith, *For what is more, is of Evil, or the* 5.
 ' Evil One.

' Swearing took not it's Beginning from *Ad pop. An-*
 ' the Will, but from Negligence only. *tiocb. Hom. 19*
 ' Thou hast heard (saith he) the Wisdom of
 ' Christ, saying, *That not only to Forswear, The Reason*
 ' *but also in ANY MANNER TO* of Oaths.
 ' SWEAR, is Devilish, and all a Device of
 ' the Evil One.

Against the
Dispraise of
solitary Life I.
1.

Of Compunc-
tion of Heart,
I. 1.

Against the
Jews, Hom.
34.

Agreeing
with Eusebius
before.

The Godly
Zeal of Chry-
sostom Com-
mendable.

Much less to
force others
Chrysost. calls
swearing and
Compelling
to Swear at all
an Error; then
we are Ortho-
dox.

‘ IF TO SWEAR IS FOUND TO
BE DEVILISH, how are they to be
punished who *For swear*.

‘ IF TO SWEAR TRULY BE A
CRIME, and a Transgressing of the Com-
mandment, where shall we place *Perjury*?

Speaking of a *Christian* (so call’d ; for he
that dare do such things we cannot call a
sincere *Christian*) whom he saw compelling
a certain Honest, Ingenious, Modest and
Faithful Matron, to go into the *Jews Syna-
gogue*, there to be sworn about some Busi-
ness in Controversie betwixt them, she de-
siring Help, and imploring to be freed from
this Wicked Force, &c. ‘ I (saith he)

‘ kindled with Zeal, arose, and not suffer-
‘ ing her to be further drawn into this Pre-
‘ varication, rescued her ; and enquired of
‘ him that had drawn her to it, Whether he
‘ were a *Christian* or not? *Who confessing he*
‘ *was* ; I severely urged and upbraided him
‘ with his Folly and Extream Madnes, to
‘ go about to draw any Body, *he professing*
‘ *himself to be a Worshipper of Christ, TO*

‘ *THE JEWS DENS, who had crucifi-*
‘ *ed him.* And going on in speaking. I
‘ taught him out of the holy Gospel, THAT
‘ IT IS NOT LAWFUL TO SWEAR
‘ AT ALL, NOR TO INCITE ANY
‘ TO SWEAR, after that ; not one that
‘ is a Believer or initiated, no, nor one that
‘ is not initiated, to be drawn to that Extre-
‘ mity: After I had spoaken much, and a
‘ long

‘ long time of it, I delivered his Mind from
 ‘ the *Error* of Opinion, &c.

Be pleased to observe how *Chrysoftom*, a
 Zealous and Famous Man, both for his
 Books, and the Persecution that he suffered,
 being *Patriarch* or Prime Overseer of the
 Church at *Constantinople*, one of the Four
 of the chiefest in the World, uses no Di-
 stinction of private and publick Oaths, the
 common Talk of our Imposers ; for here he
 labours *against drawing any to Swear at all,*
even in Judicatures, because it was not law-
 ful **TO SWEAR SO AT ALL**, no not
as the Jews swore, much less as the Gentiles.

See his great
 Praise in *Soc.*
Schol. l. 6. c. 3.
 He was of
 the Race of *Se-*
nators.

Remember
Tertullian's
 Case by this.

Again, ‘ Let none say to me, *What if*
 ‘ *any lay on me a Necessity of Swearing ? And*
 ‘ *what if he do not believe ?*

Homil. 28. Ec,
 clog. de Juram

‘ Certainly where the Law is violated, one
 ‘ must not make any mention of *Necessity* ;
 ‘ for there is one unavoidable Necessity, **NOT**
 ‘ **TO OFFEND GOD.** Moreover this I
 ‘ say, That in the mean time we may cut
 ‘ off superfluous Oaths, those I mean, which
 ‘ are made rashly and without any Necessity
 ‘ amongst Friends and Servants ; And if
 ‘ thou take away these, in the other thou
 ‘ shalt need me no more : For that Mouth
 ‘ which hath learned to fear and flee an
 ‘ Oath, if any would compel it ten thou-
 ‘ sand times, it will never admit of falling
 ‘ into that Custom, &c.

Hom. 5. ad
 pop. Antioch.

‘ But

*Chrysoſtom a-
gainſt giving
an Oath.*

*Chryſoſtom ex-
horts to be
Right Quakers
by Trembling,
and not Swear-
ing.*

*Againſt Com-
pelling to
Swear, and
ſhows how to
avoid it.*

*He differs
much from
thoſe that pu-
niſh us for not
Swearing.*

' But if thou fear nothing elſe, at leaſt
' fear that Book which thou takeſt in
' thine hands, bidding another to Swear ;
' and when thou turneſt it, and markeſt
' what *Chriſt* hath there commanded con-
' cerning *Oaths*, * **QUAKE** and **FOR-**
BEAR.

' *What doth it ſay then of OATHS there ?*

' *Anſw.* But I ſay unto you, *Swear not*
' *at all.* Doſt thou make that *Law* an Oath,
' *which forbids to Swear ?* Oh Injurious,
' Oh Unjuſt thing ! For thou doſt as if a
' Man ſhould take for his Companion a
' *Law-giver that forbids to kill, and com-*
' *mand him to be made a Murderer.* As
' therefore when a Fight is begun, although
' we are often Reviled ; yet we endure it
' well, and we ſay to him that doth it,
' that Patron of thine hath hurt me, he
' holds my Hands ; and this ſerves us for
' Solace. After the ſame manner if thou
' wilt exact an Oath of any, reſtrain thy
' ſelf, and with-hold ; and ſay to him that
' is about to ſwear, *What ſhall I do to thee,*
' *ſith God hath commanded, neither to ſwear,*
' *nor to compel to ſwear ; he now with-holdeth*
' *me ?* This is enough for the Law-giver's
' Honour, for thy Security, and his Fear
' who ſhould ſwear.

' Do thus much for me therefore, that
' they that come hither may ſay, *That it is*
' *not to be ſeen at any City, which is at An-*
' *tioch ; For they that inhabit that City, had*
' *rather*

‘ rather their Tongues should be cut out, than
 ‘ an Oath should proceed out of their Mouth,
 ‘ &c.

‘ What is it ? *Thou shalt render unto the* On Matth.
Homil. 17.
 ‘ Lord thy Oaths : that is in swearing thou
 ‘ shalt speak true ; But I say unto you, NOT
 ‘ TO SWEAR AT ALL : And then,
 ‘ to put off the Hearers, that they should
 ‘ not swear by God, he saith, Neither by
 ‘ Heaven for it is the Throne of God ; nor by
 ‘ the Earth, for it is his Foot-stool, &c. For
 ‘ he said not, because the Heaven is Fair
 ‘ and Great, nor because the Earth is Vile ;
 ‘ but because *that is the Throne of God, and*
 ‘ *this his Foot-stool* ; by all which he drives
 ‘ them to the Fear of God.

‘ ——— *What then, if any require an Oath, Object.*
 ‘ and impose a Necessity of Swearing ?

‘ A. Let the Fear of the Lord be more
 ‘ forcible to thee than all Necessity or Com-
 ‘ pulsion : For if thou wilt always object
 ‘ such like Occasions, thou wilt keep none
 ‘ of those things which are commanded :
 ‘ For thou might’st also say it concerning thy
 ‘ Wife ; *What if she be a Scold ? What if she*
 ‘ *be Nice and Curious ?* And of thy Right
 ‘ Eye ; *What if I have a Delight in it, and*
 ‘ *be inflamed with the Love of it, &c.* And
 ‘ so thou wilt trample upon all things that
 ‘ are commanded. But in the Laws which
 ‘ Men command thou darest alledge no such
 ‘ things, as, *What if this or that, &c ?* And
 ‘ if thou wilt keep the Law of Christ, thou
 ‘ wilt

Constancy in
not Swearing,
getteth Vene-
ration.

' wilt not suffer any Compulsion to hinder
' thee from the Observation thereof, for he
' that heard the Blessedness that is before, in
' the same Sermon, and shews himself such
' an one as Christ commendeth, he shall
' suffer no such Compulsion from any, seeing
' he is Venerable and Admirable with all
' Men.

Object.

' *What then shall we say is beyond Yea and
' Nay?*

Great Reason.

' A. Without doubt *AN OATH*, not
' Perjury; sith this is altogether manifest,
' and none needs be taught that it is of E-
' vil; and not so much Superfluous, as al-
' together Contrary. Now, that is Su-
' perfluous which is added needlessly, and too
' much; which surely is an Oath.

Object.

' *Why then shall this be said to be of Evil?*
' *And if it was of Evil, how was it comman-*
' *ed in the Law?*

' A. Thou wilt say that also concerning
' thy Wife; How is it now *Adultery*, which
' was sometime suffered? What then shall
' we say to these things? But that many of
' those things which were then spoaken, the
' Weakness of them that received the Law
' required: For it is a thing very unmeet
' for God to be worshipped with the Smell
' of Sacrifices, even as it is not congruent
' for a *Philosopher* to flutter and bable;
' Therefore such a Divorce is *now* called

This is True
Christian Do-
ctrine.

' *Adultery; and an Oath now comes of E-*
' *vil, when the Increasing of Virtues are come*

' to their Perfection. But if these things had
 ' been the Laws of the Devil from the be-
 ' ginning, they had never come to such
 ' Proficiency ; for unless those things had
 ' gone before, those other had never been
 ' so easily received. Do not therefore de-
 ' sire the Virtue of those things, whose Use
 ' is now past. They were available indeed
 ' then when the time required, yea, if thou
 ' pleasest, now also : For now their Virtue
 ' is shewn in that same thing also, where-
 ' in we most accuse ; for that they now ap-
 ' pear such, is their great Praise : For, un-
 ' less they had nurs'd us up well and profi-
 ' tably, and had made us fit for the receiv-
 ' ing of greater things, they would not
 ' now seem to us to be such. For as the
 ' Nurse's Teat, when it hath done all it's Office,
 ' and brought the Child to the measure of the
 ' stronger Age, seems to be unprofitable ; and
 ' the Parents, who formerly judged the Teat
 ' to be Necessary for their Child, do after-
 ' ward pursue it with very many Scorns, and
 ' usually do not only make it Uncomely in Words,
 ' but also besmear it with certain bitter Juices
 ' of Herbs, that when they cannot bridle the
 ' eager unseasonable Desire of the Child about
 ' it, they may quench it at least with those
 ' things. So also Christ said, It was of Evil ;
 ' not that he might shew the old Law to be of
 ' the Devil, but that also he might re-call
 ' them more vehemently from the old Vileness :
 ' And these things he said unto his Disci-

With Christi-
 ans it ought to
 be so. What
 Evil is it then
 to hale men
 back again up-
 on Penalties ?

'ples ; but unto the stupid *Jews*, and them
 'that persist in the same Impiety, as with a
 'certain Bitterness, he so compast their
 'City, they being captivated with Fear,
 'as that he made it inaccessible : And be-
 'cause he could not hereby restrain them,
 'but that they again desired to see it, as
 'Children running back to the Teat, he
 'took it quite away, destroying it, and
 'scattering them, most of them, far away
 'from it ; as men usually shut up Calves
 'from their Dams, that they may gain
 'them to be weaned from their accustomed
 'Food of Milk.

* A great E-
 nemy to *Ima-*
ges.

§ The Reason
 why God ad-
 mitted Oaths.
 No Ordinance
 of God or man
 originally, but
 Corruption,
 insensibly
 brought it, and
 God only suf-
 fer'd it by a
 True Deity till
 the Times of
 Reformation.

Object.

His Reason,
 our Reason.

'But if the Old Testament were of the
 'Devil, he would not have forbidden * I-
 'mages to be worshipped ; and to the con-
 'trary, have brought in and commanded
 'such a Worship as this ; for the Devil
 'would have such a thing to be done. But
 'now we see that the Law did on the con-
 'trary ; and for that Cause also the way of
 'Swearing was in times permitted, § lest
 'men should Worship Images and Swear
 'by them, *Swear*, saith he, *by the True*
 '*God*. So the Law brought not a mean
 'Good to Men, but a very great one, if it
 'sought to bring them to solid Meat.

'What Evil therefore hath Swearing ?

'Much Evil, without question ; But
 'now at this time after *SO GREAT MA-*
 '*NIFESTATIONS* of Power ; not then
 'by any means.

'Thou

' Thou wilt say; *How can it be, that the same is sometimes Good, sometimes not?*

' I will also produce too against thee,
' How is it that the same thing is sometimes good, sometimes not good? Doth
' not all that is in the World proclaim the
' same, as Educations, Arts, Fruits and all
' other things?

' Therefore first weigh that in our own
' Nature: For to be carried in one's Arms,
' is a good part in the first Age, *afterwards*
' *a very pitiful thing*. To use Chew'd Meats
' in the beginning of one's Life is good, *afterwards* *very full of Indecency and Loathsomeness*: To be fed with Milk and to flee to
' the Nourishment of the Teats, at the first
' is profitable and wholesome, *but afterwards*
' *hurtful and noisome*. Thou seest how the
' same things are sometimes good, according to the times, and sometimes appear
' to be of another Nature: For it is a
' comely thing for a Child to wear a Child's
' Vesture, *but shameful for a Man*. Wouldst
' thou also learn on the contrary, how those
' things are not fit for a Child, which are
' not for a Man? *Give a Man's Vesture*
' *to a Child, and great Laughter will follow*
' *thereupon, and greater Danger in Going,*
' *making him to reel this way and that way*:
' *Commit unto him the Care of Civil Businesses*
' *and Affairs, either to Traffique, or Sow or*
' *Reap, and again it will be very ridiculous.*
' But what do I speak of these? Even Man-

' *slaughter* it self, which Christ calls evident-
 ' ly *a Work of the Devil*, sometime in due tea-
 ' son done, hath been praised ; as *Phineas*
 ' killed a Man, and it was reputed to him for
 ' *Righteousness* ; *Abraham* also was not only
 ' an *Homicide*, but a *Parricide* ; and *Peter*
 ' *slew two*, but it was a Spiritual Work : So
 ' we must not only consider the Actions, but
 ' the Time, Cause, Will and Difference of
 ' Persons, and all other Circumstances.

* Much regard- Again, in his *Unperfected* Work*, cap. 5.
 ded and obser-
 ved by vene-
 rable Antiqui-
 ty, James on
 the Fathers,
 Part 2. p. 36.
Act. Mon. v. 1.
 p. 701.

A Great
 Truth ; For-
 swearing ends
 in No-swear-
 ing.

' It hath been said, *Thou shalt not For-*
 ' *swear ; but shalt perform to the Lord thy*
 ' *Oaths ; but I say unto you, SWEAR NOT*
 ' *AT ALL, &c.]* Behold the Fourth
 ' Commandment, which Covetous Men
 ' account the least, because they do not ac-
 ' count it a Sin to Swear, without which
 ' the Command of the Law cannot stand ?
 ' For unless Swearing it self be forbidden,
 ' False Oaths cannot be taken away, *because*
 ' *out of Swearing, springs up Forswearing ;*
 ' for whosoever swears often, at one time
 ' or other swears falsely ; for this Reason So-
 ' *lomon* gives that Admonition, *Accustom*
 ' *not thy Mouth to Swearing ; for there is*
 ' *much Danger therein.* For as he that ac-
 ' customs himself to talk much, must needs
 ' at one time or other utter Unseasonable
 ' Words ; and he that useth frequently to
 ' strike with his Hand, cannot but some-
 ' times strike Unjustly ; so he that accu-
 ' stoms

' stoms himself to swear in things Conveni-
 ' ent, oft-times Forswears himself, even a-
 ' gainst his Will (*Custom prevailing in him*)
 ' in things superfluous ; for we can accu-
 ' stom our selves to any thing when we will,
 ' but we cannot turn off that Custom when
 ' we will. And what the Judgment of
 ' God is against them that swear, *Solomon*
 ' teacheth ; *A man*, saith he, *that Swears*
 ' *much, a Wound shall not depart from his*
 ' *House*. If then a Wound depart not from
 ' them that swear, how shall it at length de-
 ' part from them that forswear. Tell me, my
 ' Friend, What dost thou get by Swearing ?
 ' For if thy Adversary did believe that thou
 ' would'st Swear well, he would never
 ' force thee to swear at all ; but because he
 ' thinks thou wilt swear falsely, therefore it is
 ' that he compels thee to swear ; and when
 ' thou hast sworn, he doth not sit down as
 ' satisfied in the Truth of thine Oath, but
 ' goes away full of Revenge, as it were in
 ' Condemnation of thy Perjury.

Excellently
 distinguish'd &
 the Sordidness
 of Oaths fully
 represented.

' An Oath never has a good End, for
 ' some will judge thou hast sworn for Co-
 ' vetousness ; and some too, that thou hast
 ' Forsworn : But they that are willing to
 ' suppose well of thee, although they do
 ' not believe thou hast sworn *FALSLY*,
 ' yet they are not able to affirm thou hast
 ' sworn *IN TRUTH* : But no man can
 ' maintain thou hast done *RELIGIOUSLY*.
 ' By Swearing therefore thou comest into

According to
Eusebius. The
 Unhappiness
 of Swearing,
 especially a-
 gainst Consci-
 ence. His Ad-
 vice about the
 —Matter,
 when drove to
 a Pinch.

‘ Reproach with thy Enemies, and into
 ‘ Suspicion with thy Friends. But thou
 ‘ wilt say perhaps,

Object. ‘ *What shall I do; he neither doth nor will
 ‘ believe me, unless I swear?*

‘ Be content rather to loose thy Money
 ‘ than thy Salvation; set more by thy Soul,
 ‘ than by thy Estate: If thou should’st lose
 ‘ any part of thy Estate, thou may’st live
 ‘ notwithstanding; but if thou losest God,
 ‘ whereon wilt thou live? Dost thou not
 ‘ know, that what thou partest Self-deny-
 ‘ ingly with for the Fear of God, thou re-
 ‘ ceivest a greater Reward for it, than if
 ‘ thou hadst given Alms; because the more
 ‘ we bear the Cross, the more worthily are
 ‘ we crowned for it? Behold, my Friend,

His Caution
 to those that
 impose Oaths,
 and Reflection
 upon the Pra-
 ctice.

‘ *I advise thee not to force any man to swear;*
 ‘ if thou thinkest he will swear well, avoid
 ‘ it; or if thou thinkest he will swear amiss,
 ‘ avoid it so much the rather: For although
 ‘ he swear well, yet thou, as far as relates
 ‘ to thy Conscience, art become the Cause
 ‘ of his Perjury, *because thou compellest him to*
 ‘ *take an Oath with this Intention, not barely*
 ‘ *that he should Swear, but that he should*
 ‘ *Forswear; for if thou hadst thought he would*
 ‘ *have sworn honestly, thou wouldst not have*
 ‘ *forced him to swear at all. Oh foolish man,*
 ‘ *that compellest another to swear! Thou*
 ‘ knowest not what thou dost: He, al-
 ‘ though he forswear himself, yet does it
 ‘ with Advantage; but thou, without any
 ‘ Advantage,

Advantage, art found a Partaker of his
Perjury. He that does not stick at Lying,
 does not fear Swearing ; for he that tells *Lying as bad*
 a Lye, goes beyond the Truth in his Heart ; *as Swearing in*
 and he that swears falsely, passes over God *his Esteem.*
 in his Words : What then is the Difference
 between passing over God, and going
 beyond the Truth, seeing God is Truth it
 self ?

This is the only Difference, That when
 we Lye, we pass over the Truth in our
 Heart ; but when we Forswear, we pass o-
 ver God in Words ; For to men we give
 Satisfaction by WORDS ; to God, by
 CONSCIENCE. God himself, who
 forbade Forswearing, even he afterward
 commanded NOT TO SWEAR : He
 therefore that is not afraid to set light by
 the Commands of God in Swearing, will
 not be afraid to do the like in Forswear-
 ing. But what wouldst thou have ? Doth
 he fear God, or doth he not fear him ?
 If he be one that fears God, he will not
 Lye, though he be not sworn ; but if he
 be one that does not fear God, he can-
 not speak Truth, though he be sworn.
 Hear ye CLERGY-MEN, who bring
 the HOLY GOSPELS for men to
 swear upon ; How can ye be secure from
 that Oath, who sow the Seed of Perjury ?
 He that brings the Fire by which an House is
 burnt, is he a Stranger to the Burning ? or
 who reaches a Sword, whereby a Man is

Admirably
well argued.

His Rebuke
to the Clergy
for tending
the Gospels (or
Bible) to swear
on.

slain, is not he an Accessory to the Slaughter?
 So he that gives the Opportunity of For-
 swearing, is a Partaker of the Perjury: If
 it were well done to swear, ye said rightly,
 that we gave them the Gospel to Swear, not
 to Forswear; But now ye know, **THAT**
IT IS A SIN EVEN TO SWEAR
WELL, how can ye be acquitted that give
 the Occasion of Sinning against God? Let
 the Fire cease, and there is no Burning; take
 away the Sword, and the man is not slain;
SO TAKE AWAY SWEARING,
AND THERE IS NO FORSWEAR-
ING. Be these things spoaken of them
 that swear by God. But as for them that
 swear by the Elements, their Iniquity is
 more detestable; for *Heaven* and *Earth*,
 and the rest of the Elements God made for
 his own Service; not for men to swear by:
 For behold in the Law it is commanded,
 that they should swear by none but God:
 He therefore that swears by Heaven, or
 by the Earth, or whatsoever it is he swears
 by, makes a God of it; Therefore every
 one commits *Idolatry*, who swears by any
 thing *besides* God, *if it were at all lawful*
to swear, because he does not perform his
 Oaths to the Lord his God, but to the
 Elements: And so he commits a double
 Sin; *first*, in that he swears; and *second-*
ly, in making a God of that by which he
 swears, &c.

Again,

Again, in Chap. 23. Homil. 43. on these words, *Wo unto you Blind Guides, who say, Whosoever shall swear by the Temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the Gold of the Temple, he is a Debter*——

‘ Many *Christians* (saith he) now a-days do
 ‘ so unwisely understand many things; for
 ‘ lo, if there shall be any Cause, he seems to
 ‘ do a small matter, who swears by *God*;
 ‘ but he that swears by *the Gospel*, seems to
 ‘ have done some greater thing: To whom
 ‘ it may be said, *Fools! The Holy Scriptures*
 ‘ *are for God, not God for the Scriptures;*
 ‘ *for God is GREATER which sanctifieth*
 ‘ *the Gospel, than the Gospel which is sancti-*
 ‘ *fied of God.*

Again, *Hom 9. on Acts of the Apostles, ch. 3.*

‘ To this conduces not a little, *not to*
 ‘ *Swear*, and *not to be Angry*; for in not be-
 ‘ ing Angry we shall not have an Enemy;
 ‘ and cast off a man’s Oath, and withal
 ‘ thou shalt cast off those things that con-
 ‘ cern Wrath, and shalt extinguish all An-
 ‘ ger: For Wrath and an Oath are like the
 ‘ Wind. We set forth sail, but there is
 ‘ no benefit of the Sail if there be no Wind;
 ‘ so if we do not cry out, nor swear, we cut
 ‘ the Sinews of Wrath. Come, tell me
 ‘ for what Cause an Oath was introduced,
 ‘ and why it was allowed? Let us tell it’s
 ‘ *Original*, and whence it sprung up again,
 ‘ and

Again, the
Original of an
 Oath. He con-
 curs with us.

The Defini-
tion of an
Oath.

A severe De-
clamation a-
gainst Compel-
ling People to
swear.

‘ and how, and by whom ; and by our De-
 ‘ claration, we shall gratifie your Attention :
 ‘ For, he that doth justly, must necessarily
 ‘ be also studious of Wisdom ; and he that
 ‘ is not yet such, is not worthy to hear a
 ‘ Discourse: For *Abraham* made Covenants,
 ‘ and sacrificed Sacrifices, and offered Offer-
 ‘ ings ; and as yet there was not an Oath :
 ‘ Whence then came in an Oath? *When*
 ‘ *Evils increased, when all things became top-*
 ‘ *sturvey, when they inclined to Idolatry ; then*
 ‘ *verily when they appeared unfaithful, they*
 ‘ *called God to witness, as giving a Surety for*
 ‘ *Security for their Words ; for an Oath is a*
 ‘ *Suretiship, where their Behaviours have no*
 ‘ *Trust or Credit : Whereupon, first he that*
 ‘ *swears is taxed, If he have no Credit*
 ‘ *without an Oath, and the greatest Sure-*
 ‘ *ty : And because men so little trust one*
 ‘ *another, they seek God for a Surety, not*
 ‘ *Man. Secondly, He is in the same Crime*
 ‘ *who receives an Oath, if he draw God*
 ‘ *to be a Surety for Contracts ; and say,*
 ‘ *THAT HE WILL NOT TRUST,*
 ‘ *EXCEPT HE HAVE HIM. Oh*
 ‘ *monstrous thing ! Oh shameful Disgrace !*
 ‘ *Thou a Worm, Dust and Ashes, and a Va-*
 ‘ *pour ; darest thou snatch thy Lord, who art*
 ‘ *such an one for a Surety, and compellest to*
 ‘ *accept him ? Tell me, if a Fellow-Ser-*
 ‘ *vant should say to your Children, striving*
 ‘ *among themselves, and not trusting one*
 ‘ *another, Unless the Common Master be-*
 ‘ *come*

come a Surety, there is no trusting; would
 not many Stripes be inflicted, that he
 might learn, that he should make use of
 him as a Lord in other things, not in
 these? What do I speak of a Fellow-
 Servant? For, if one would have a more
 Venerable Man, would not the Case have
 Disgrace in it? *But I shall* (saith he)
therefore neither compel him, because this is
also amongst men. He may say thus, Some-
 times thou may'st not receive a Surety to
 thine. What then? *And I shall lose* (saith he)
what is given. I would not say this; but
 do not thou endure that God be reproach-
 ed. Therefore he which Compels, hath
 a MORE Unavoidable Punishment than
 he which Swears. Likewise he also which
 swears when none requires; this also is
 harder, that one swears for a Half-Pen-
 ny, for a little Commodity, for Unrigh-
 teousness. And these things are so dan-
 gerous, when there are no Perjuries; but
 if Perjuries are committed, then all things
 are confounded, and both he that swears,
 and he that receives an Oath, are the
 Cause.

Again, of the
 Danger of
 Compelling
 People to
 swear.

But there are some things that are not
known, say they.

Object!

But fore-seeing these things, thou must
 do nothing rashly; but if thou shalt do
 any thing negligently, take the Penalty of
 the Inconvenience in thy own Hand;
 better so to suffer Loss than otherwise.

For,

‘ For, tell me, Thou hailest a Man to an
 ‘ Oath ; What dost thou seek ? Wouldst
 ‘ thou have him to Forswear ? But this is
 ‘ extream Folly ; for the Loss will turn up-
 ‘ on thy own Head : It were better to lose
 ‘ thy Means, than that He should be lost ;
 ‘ wherefore thou dost this to thine own Da-
 ‘ mage, and to God’s Dishonour ; such is
 ‘ the Soul of a Beast and of a Wicked
 ‘ Man !

Object. ‘ *But I expect that he may not Forswear.*
 ‘ Therefore believe him without an Oath
 ‘ also.

Object. ‘ *But there are many, say they, who with-
 ‘ out an Oath dare Defraud, who with an
 ‘ Oath do not do it.*

‘ Thou deceivest thy self, O Man ! A
 ‘ Man who hath learn’d to Steal and to
 ‘ Wrong a man, will also trample upon an
 ‘ Oath often : But if he hath a Reverence
 ‘ in Swearing, much more in doing Un-
 ‘ justly.

Object. ‘ But thou wilt say, *He suffers this un-
 ‘ willingly.*

‘ Therefore he is worthy of Excuse. But
 ‘ what shall I say of Oaths of the Courts
 ‘ that are left ? For there thou canst say no
 ‘ such thing ; for there for Six Pence both
 ‘ Oaths and Perjuries are made . *For, because
 ‘ a Thunder-Bolt doth not come down from a-*

* An Oath is ‘ *bove, and all things are not overturned, thou*
 a Binding of ‘ *standest, and WILT * BIND GOD :*
 God for our ‘ *Why ? That thou mayst get Herbs and Shoes*
 Security. ‘ *for*

for a small Price, thou callest him to witness:

Do we therefore think we do not sin, because they are not punished? This is the

Lord's Mercy not our Desert. Swear by A Pathetical

thy own Child, swear by thy self; say, Censure of

So let the Officer keep from my Sides: But Oaths, and

thou art afraid of thy Sides; **IS GOD** them that use

MORE VILE, more Contemptible them even in

than thy Head? Say, *So may I not be*

blind? But Christ so spareth us, that he

FORBIDS US TO SWEAR EVEN

BY OUR OWN HEAD. But we do

so despise the Glory of God, *that he is*

drawn every where: Ye know not what

God is, and with what a Mouth he ought

to be invoked. Moreover, when we

speak of any Virtuous Man, we say, *Wash*

thy Mouth, that so thou mayest be heedful.

But now we vainly distract that Honoura-

ble Name, *which is a Name above every*

Name, which is wonderful in all the Earth,

which the Devils bearing do tremble at:

OH MOST CONTEMPTIBLE CUSTOM

WHICH HATH DONE

THAT! Lastly, If thou shalt impose

on any a Necessity of Swearing in the

Holy House, how horrible an Oath dost

thou enjoyn, if thou dost so? Is it that

we abuse that simply, *this not so?* Ought

not one even to dread when God is nam-

ed? But even among the Jews this

Name was so Reverend, *that it was writ-*

ten on the Plate of the Mitre, and none might

bear

With what
Tenderness
God's Name
should be used

(a) *Chrysostom's*
Boldness.
 He testifies
 our Mind.

(b) Mark the
 great Zeal of
Chrysostom in
 this place.

(c) Men never
 could plead
 Conscience
 for not being
 believed with-
 out an Oath ;
 many have, to
 be credited
 without one.

' bear those Letters of the Name of God, but
 ' only the High-Priest: And now also we fo
 ' bear his Name tenderly. If it was not law-
 ' ful for all to name God simply, how great
 ' Audaciousness is it to call it in Witness?
 ' Tell me now how great Madness is it? Behold I
 ' say and (a) testify to you, amend those Court-
 ' Oaths, and shew me all those that do not o-
 ' bey: Behold even in your presence I will
 ' command them that are set apart for the
 ' Ministry, the House of Prayer, and admo-
 ' nish and shew, **THAT IT IS NOT LAW-**
 ' **FUL FOR ANY TO SWEAR**, nor other-
 ' wise neither. Let him therefore be brought
 ' to me, whosoever he be, because these
 ' things also ought to be done before us,
 ' because ye are Children. (b) Oh Shame!
 ' for it is Confusion that ye have need to be
 ' instructed in some things. Darest not
 ' thou that art initiated touch the Holy
 ' Table? But that is yet worse, thou which
 ' art initiated, darest thou touch the Holy
 ' Table, and that which it is not lawful for
 ' all the Priests to touch, **AND SO SWEAR?**
 ' but being gone out, thou would'st not
 ' touch the Head of thy Child; but touch-
 ' est thou the Table, and do'st not dread nor
 ' fear? Bring such to me, I will inflict a
 ' just Punishment; and with Joy will send
 ' both away with this Commandment, Do
 ' as you list, I (c) *Impose this Law*, **NOT**
 ' **TO SWEAR AT ALL:** What
 ' Hope is there of Salvation, when you so con-
 ' temn

temn and despise all things ? Hast thou
 therefore received Letters and Badges that
 thou should'st lose thy Soul ? What so
 great thing hast thou gained, as that
 which thou hast lost ? Hath he forsworn ?
 Thou hast lost both thy self and him : But
 hath he not Forsworn ? Even so thou hast
 lost, *who hast driven him to transgress the*
Commandment. Let us expel this Disease
from the Soul : Let us drive it now from the*
Court, and from all Merchants and Trades-
men's Shops. It was a greater Labour to us
 do not you think, that worldly things are
 corrected by the Transgressings of Divine
 Laws. *But he doth not believe, saith he,*
for I have also heard this of some, Unless
I swear many Oaths, they will not believe
me : Thou art the Cause of these things,
 who swearest so promptly and easily. *But*
if this were not, but it were manifest to all,
that thou would'st not swear, believe me, more
Credit would be given to thy very BECK,
than those who swear abundance of Oaths.
 Whom therefore do you more believe, me
 that do not swear, or them that do swear ?
But, says he, thou art a Prince and a
Bishop.

* This was
 Chrysostom's
 Exhortation :
 Now it's said,
How can we
Trade without
an Oath ?

Object.

What then, if I shall shew thee, that
 it is not this only ? Answer me in Truth
 now : If I had sworn always, and at eve-
 ry season, what Privilege would my Prin-
 cipality have ? No, thou see'st that it is
 not for this : What gainest thou then, tell
 me

Encourage-
ment to suf-
tain the Pe-
nalty.

Our Doctrine
made an Axi-
om by Chry-
sostom.

me now ? Paul *Hunger'd* ; and do thou
chuse rather to hunger than to transgress a-
ny of God's Commandments : Why art thou
so Unbelieving ? Shalt thou chuse to do and to
suffer all things, that thou may'st not swear,
and shall not be reward thee ? But he feeds
daily For swearers and great Swearers, and
will he give thee up to Famish, because thou
hearken'st to him ? Let all men know, that
NONE MAY SWEAR THAT ARE
OF THIS CONGREGATION ; and
hereby we may be assured, and by this Sign be
distinguished from the Greeks and from all
men, and not only by the Faith (or Christi-
an-Profession.) Let us have this Mark
from Heavenly things, that we may shine
with it every where, as the Kings Flock.
We are now known by the Mouth and
the Tongue, as the Barbarians, and they
that know to speak Greek ; for we are di-
scerned from the Barbarians by the Tongue.
Tell me now how are Parrets known ?
Is it not that they speak like Men ? And we
also may be known, if we speak like the A-
postles, and speak as the Angels : For, if
any one say, Swear ; let him hear, that
Christ hath commanded, **EVEN NOT**
TO SWEAR : This sufficeth to bring
in all Virtue. It is a certain Gate of God-
liness, a way bringing on unto the Love of
Wisdom (or Philosophy) It is a certain Ex-
ercise (or Mastery) Let us keep these things,
that we attain both present and future good
things,

' things, by the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 ' with whom, to the Father, with the Holy Spi-
 ' rit, be Glory, Dominion, Honour, now and
 ' for ever and ever, Amen.

' These Precepts were because of the Jew-
 ' ish Depravation ; but those perfectiones, to
 ' despise and relinquish Riches, stand man-
 ' fully, lay down thy Life for Preaching ;
 ' despise all Earthly things ; have nothing
 ' to do with this present Life ; do good to
 ' them that unjustly afflict thee ; if thou
 ' be defrauded, bleſs thou ; if any slander
 ' thee, honour thou him ; be over all things :
 ' It was fit to hear these and such like things ;
 ' But now we discourse concerning an Oath.
 ' And it is even as if when a man should come
 ' to Philosophy, he should draw him away from
 ' those his Teachers, and make him spell with
 ' Letters and Syllables.

' Consider now, what a Confusion it would
 ' be for a man that hath a weighty Scrip, and
 ' a Staff, and a Gown to go to the Grammar-
 ' School with Boys, and to learn the same
 ' things that they do ; would it not be a mat-
 ' ter of much Laughter ? but more from you ;
 ' for there is not so great a Difference betwixt
 ' Philosophy and the Elements of Speech, as
 ' between the Jewish Matters, and Ours ; but
 ' as much as is between Angels and Men. Tell
 ' me now, if any should call down an Angel
 ' from Heaven, and tell him, That he must
 ' stand and hear our Sermons, as if he must
 ' be thereby instructed. would it not be a ridi-

'culous and confused thing? And if it were
 'a ridiculous thing to be yet instructed by
 'these; tell me now how great Condemnation,
 'and how great Confusion were it, not to give
 'Attention to those former? And how then
 'is it not Confusion, that a Christian must be
 'instructed, that he must not swear? But
 'let us repress our Affections, that we be
 'not more laught at. Let us now discourse
 'concerning the Jewish Law to day: What
 'is that, will he say? Do not use thy
 'Mouth to Swear, nor be familiar with the
 'Holy Name. Why? For as a Servant if
 'he be continually scourged, shall not be
 'clear from Marks, so neither he that swear-
 'eth. Consider the Wisdom of that Wise
 'Man; He said not, *Do not use thy Mind, but*
 '*thy Mouth*; because he knew it to be all
 'of the Mouth, and which is easily amen-
 'ded, &c. The Punishment here that is
 'opposed to it, tells us, that it is not Per-
 'jury, but *Swearing*, that is here to be re-
 'moved; Therefore **TO SWEAR IS**
 '**A SIN.** Verily the Soul is full of such
 'Wounds and Scars. *But if thou swear be-*
 '*cause he doth not believe; say thou, Believe,*
 'or if thou wilt not, swear by thy self; and
 'I do not say, that thou art contrary to
 'the Law-giver: Far be it; for, saith he,
 '*Let your Word be YEA, YEA, and NAY*
 '**NAY**; that herein I may candescend to you,
 'and bring you to this, that I may free you
 'from this Tyrannical Custom. Will you
 : learn

* learn why they allowed them of old to
 * Swear, not to Forswear? *It was because*
 * *they swore by Idols: You must not be con-*
 * *founded in these Laws, in which they*
 * *that were weak were conversant. For, if I*
 * *now take a Greek, I do not forthwith enjoyn*
 * *him this; but now I admonish him, That*
 * *Christ must be known: But a Believer, and*
 * *one who hath learned him, and heard, if he*
 * *should use the same Indulgence and Liberty,*
 * *as the Greek, What Profit and Advantage*
 * *would there be?*

* Christ hath made a Law, that NONE
 * **SWEAR**; Tell me now what is done a-
 * bout this Law, lest perchance coming a- Hom. 10. p.
 * gain, as the Apostle saith; I do not spare. 101.

We hope none will dispute whether *Chry-*
ostom was against *All Swearing*, or that he
 understood Christ's Doctrine as we do; yet
 no Body can promise for them that endea-
 vour to squeeze *Swearing* out of Christ's
SWEAR NOT AT ALL. We have been
 the larger in this Authority, partly because he
 excellently disputes it; and partly, because
 our Case needs it; and lastly, to show *Chri-*
stians their Apostacy, that they may reform.

Jerom. Libr. Epistol. part 3. Tract. 2.
Epist. 2. Of Obedience, Knowledge
and Revenge.

LII. * Thou saidst, if I mistake not,
 * *That on this Account thou may'st justly ren-*

‘ *der Evil for Evil, and oughtest to swear*
 ‘ *with them that swear, because the Lord*
 ‘ *sometimes swore, and rendred Evil for Evil.*

‘ *First, I know that all things are not*
 ‘ *fit for us, that are Servants, which are a-*
 ‘ *greeable to the Master, &c. I know the*
 ‘ *Lord oftentimes swore, who hath forbidden*
 ‘ *us to swear. Nor must we rashly speak E-*
 ‘ *vil of, or Blaspheme in this, that he for-*
 ‘ *bad another what he did himself ; because*
 ‘ *it may not be said, the Lord swore as*
 ‘ *Lord, whom none forbad to swear : It is*
 ‘ *not lawful for us as Servants to Swear ;*
 ‘ *because we are forbidden by the Law of our*
 ‘ *Lord to Swear. But lest we should suffer*
 ‘ *an Offence by his Example, since the time*
 ‘ *he forbad Us to Swear, neither did he him-*
 ‘ *self ever Swear, &c.*

God never
 swore proper-
 ly.

Upon Zachary, Book 2. Chap. 8.

‘ *And love ye not a False Oath]*—As to
 ‘ the Lord’s commanding in the Gospel,
 ‘ *But I say unto you, Swear not at all ; but let*
 ‘ *your Word be YEA, YEA ; NAY, NAY ;*
 ‘ He that shall *Never Swear*, can never
 ‘ Forswear : But he that sweareth, let him
 ‘ hear that which is written, *Thou shalt not*
 ‘ *take the Name of the Lord thy God in a vain*
 ‘ *thing ; for all these things I hate, saith the*
 ‘ *Lord, according to the words of Malachy,*
 ‘ *saying, And ye did all that I hate. In Pre-*
 ‘ *cepts which belong to Life, and are clear,*
 ‘ *we ought not to seek an Allegory, lest we*
 ‘ *seek*

‘ seek a Knot in Rush, as says the Comick.

On *Jeremy* 4. Book 1. chap. 3.

And thou shalt Swear the Lord liveth in Truth, and Righteousness, and Judgment, &c.

‘ And how doth the Gospel forbid us to Swear? But here it is said for a Confession, thou shalt Swear, and for the Condemnation of Idols, by which *Israel* swore. Lastly, Offences are taken away, and he sweareth by the Lord; and what is said in the Old Testament, *the Lord liveth*, is an Oath, to the condemning of all the Dead, by whom all Idolatry sweareth. And it is also to be minded, that an Oath hath these Companions, Truth, Judgment and Righteousness; if these be wanting, it is not Swearing, but Forswearing.

An excellent Reason, why Oaths were permitted.

Also on *Matth.* Book 1. chap. 5.

But I say unto you, Swear not at all, neither by Heaven, &c.

‘ The Jews had always this Custom of Swearing by the Elements, as the Prophet’s Speech often reproves them. He that sweareth, either reverenceth or loveth him by whom he sweareth. In the Law it is commanded, that we must not swear but by the Lord our God.

‘ The Jews Swearing by the Angels, and the City *Jerusalem*, and the Temple, and the Elements, did worship the Carnal Creatures with the Honour and Observance of

This between ' God, * Lastly, consider, that here the
 the Two Stars ' Saviour forbad not to swear by God, but
 seems a self- ' by Heaven, &c. * and this was allowed
 contradiction ; ' by the Law, as to little ones, that as they
 but doubtless ' offered Sacrifices to God, lest they should
 he intends it ' sacrifice to Idols, so also they were suffer-
 of the 2d Pro- ' ed to Swear by God ; *Not that they did*
 hibition in a ' *this rightly*, but that it was better to yield
 further Rea- ' that to God than to Devils. *But the*
 son, why ' *Truth of the Gospel doth not receive an Oath,*
 Oaths were ' *since every faithful Word is for an Oath.*
 permitted.

Those of after Times, that in some re-
 spect allow of an Oath, ground most upon
 the Authority of *Augustine*, as he from the
 larger acceptation of the Word *Swear*, and
Oath, which he extends to that which *Na-*
zianzen (as before) calls but a firm Faithful-
 ness joyned to his words, which yet he will
 not admit of, but to a *Paul*, a *Planter of*
Churches, speaking by the Spirit of God to
them he had begotten in the Gospel, in Danger
to be seduced by False Apostles, and to sleight
him, and seek a Proof of Christ speaking in
him, compelled by them to seem a Fool in glo-
rrying, and so driven, and no otherwise, to
seem a Swearer too, yea, even to an Augustine,
 and so to compel him (even *Augustine*) to
 say, *It is a hard Question ; I have always a-*
voided it. But though he durst not con-
 demn it altogether out of Reverence to the
 Apostle, which he thought used it, because
 of the Form of Speech ; yet to shew that he
 did

did little encourage men to practise it, as any Act at all of the Worship of God, much less an *August Act*, He saith, *That False Swearing is Deadly ; True Swearing, Dangerous ; No-Swearing, Safe ; God only Swears safely, who cannot be deceived.*

Augustinus de Sermone Domini,
Serm. 28.

LIII. And *Augustine* himself confesseth,
‘ That it was usual to alledge *Christianity*
‘ for not Swearing, bringing in one Saying,
‘ *It is not lawful for a Christian to Swear,* If men can’t
‘ *when an Oath is required of him ; I am a* Swear safely,
‘ *Christian ; it is not lawful to swear.* And then it is more
‘ on *Psalms* 88. as allowing the Unlawful- dangerous to
‘ ness, he saith, ‘ It is well that God hath swear than
‘ *forbidden men to Swear,* lest by Custom of and it is bet-
‘ it (in as much as we are apt to Mistake) ter for People,
‘ we commit Perjury. *There is none but* nay, they are
‘ *God can * safely Swear, &c.* bound to Re-
fuse it.

And in that very Book, which is alledged for it, he saith, ‘ *I say unto you, SWEAR* de Mendac.

‘ *NOT AT ALL,* lest by Swearing ye come
‘ to a Facility of Swearing ; from a Facility
‘ to a Custom, and from a Custom ye fall into
‘ Perjury. But if any think that Book makes most for them, let them consider the Author hath retracted it ; for what Cause let himself speak in the end of his Book of *Retractions* : For sure, that which we have here cited out of it, agreeth with his other Works, which contain much more to this Purpose.

It is obscure
and intricate,

‘ Where

De Verb. 7a-
cobi, Ante om-
nia nolite ju-
rare, *Serm.* 28.

‘ Where, says he, wouldst thou chuse to
‘ walk ? Upon the Brink of a Precipice, or
‘ far from it ? I think far from it. So he
‘ which swears, walks in the Border, and
‘ *walketh with unsure Feet*, because humane:
‘ If thou stumblest, down thou goest ; If
‘ thou fallest, down thou goest.

We would fain know, if a most *August*
Act of God’s Worship be nighest the Pit’s
Brink, or farthest from it ? for there all
ought to chuse to walk ; in whose Way
they that walk, walk safely ; their Place is
sure, and their Foot-steps shall not slide ;
but the Wicked’s Feet *are in slippery Places*,
where *Augustine* says, Swearers walk.

(a) If it be-
longs to the
Righteousness
of the King-
dom of Hea-
ven, Not to
Swear, then
what will be-
come of those,
that not only
break that
Command-
ment of Swear
not at all, but
teach men so
to do ? Nay,
punish men
for not obey-
ing such An-
ti-Evangeli-
cal Doctrine.

(b) Then cer-
tainly they
are to be re-
jected of true
Christians.

Consider what he saith on those words
of Christ in *Mat.* 5. ‘ It is the Righteous-
‘ ness of the *Pharisees* not to Forswear ;
‘ This he confirmeth, *who forbiddeh to*
‘ *swear, which (a) belongeth to the Righteous-*
‘ *ness of the Kingdom of Heaven* : For, as he
‘ which doth not speak, cannot speak a
‘ Lye, so he cannot Forswear, *which*
‘ *doth not swear*. He goes on to excuse
Paul, and says, ‘ That an Oath *is not among*
‘ *good things, but among (b) evil things*, and
‘ used for the Infirmitie of others, which *is*
‘ *Evil*, from which we pray, that we may
‘ *be daily delivered*.

But there is this to be said for *Augustine*,
and

and some others after him, that he and they write not clearer in a Point so constantly maintained; His *Horizon* then was over-casting apace. *Apostacy*, as a mighty Torrent, did not only swell and beat against the Simplicity of the *Christian* Doctrine and Discipline; but like an unruly and impetuous Sea broak down the Banks of Primitive Society, and made way for all sort of Superstition, worldly Interest and Fraud; that to say *no more* than he did, was to incur, perhaps, the Censure of the *Grande*s of his Age, who had joyn'd Earthly Policy to *Christian*-Religion, and cast off the Blessed Yoak of their Self-denying Lord, to swim in the Delicious Liberty of the World: A *Time* full of such Circumstances, as seem'd to conspire the Return of *Oaths*, that were not dead, but retir'd only: For as men grew *False* and *Distrustful*, Truth became burthensome, and *Yea* and *Nay* no Security with them; and therefore disclaim'd, or rather exil'd them their Government; Old *Judaism* or *Gentilism* pleas'd them better. 'Twas harder Living that Watchful Life that was sufficient to credit a *Yea* or *Nay*, than to take an Oath, that dependeth upon the saying of so many Words only: This was considerable, and made Swearing then, and continues it grateful to our very Times. But sad it is, that *Oaths* rid thus in State, while *Integrity* went Barefoot, and Evangelical *Yea* and *Nay* turn'd

turn'd off for a *Non-sufficient*, and that too, not without *Fines, Prisons, and a great deal of Reproach*. However, we must acknowledge, that the Gravity and *Christian Care* of this Person, and other his Contemporaries, appeared in not only dissuading, but deterring those Ages from the *Brink* (for so he calls *Swearing at all*) and turning their Faces after the *Woman*, now on her Flight into the *Wilderness*: During all which Time, the *Witnesses*, though fewest in Number, and mystically clothed in Sack-cloth, forbore not to *prophezie* even in this Particular.

And we hope, having no certain Knowledge to the contrary, that most of them, at least were Men fearing God, and serving him according to what they knew, and in that Manner they were perswaded was most acceptable to him. And as *Irenaeus* said of the *Poets* and *Philosophers*, *These men; every one seeing that which was connatural from part of the Divine-sown-Reason, spcak excellently, and were right and consistent with themselves, they are ours*, Iren. lib. 5. cap. 18. So we sincerely declare of men differing from us, that as we desire the *Good of all*, so we can own the *Good in all*, and the *Truth* in all, and receive it from them, though in other Respects our *Adversaries*; and would have all to do the like with us and each other: And howbeit our *Adversaries* may have hard Thoughts of some of the Persons our Matter leads us to instance

instance, as men interessed in the Doctrine and Practices of those darker Times they lived in, and of us for making Use of such for *Authorities*; yet we hope they would also judge it an *hard* and very *cruel* Thing to repute them utter *Cast-aways*. And though we know that Men differ within themselves, and all of them more or less from the Truth, yet since there may be some Truth and Sincerity, we cannot but acknowledge and embrace it: And we hope, the *Reasons* and *Authorities* of others they bring, and the *Concessions* and *Confessions* they make, may, and indeed ought to be of Weight in that Point, at least to shew, that it is no new, strange or unreasonable Thing for us to *refuse Oaths*. And though some might with a Mixture of *Superstition* and *Will-worship*, undertake and maintain that Strictness and Preciseness, which some of the holy *Ancients* by the Spirit of Truth were led to practise (the ancient Histories of whom, from *Eye-Witnesses*, as the Word signifies, of some of them, we in a great Part believe) And some later more *Enlightened* and *Zealous* Men, taking Offence thereat, but especially at the *Hypocrisie* and *Abomination*, palliated by such *fair Pretences*, have strained much in Opposition to that *Evangelical Doctrine*, yet is the Doctrine nevertheless a Truth in it self. Nor can we believe that all that were accounted *Hereticks* were out of the *Catholick* or *Universal Church*; for the Word

*Euseb. Pam.
Socr. Schol.
Evagr, &c.*

Word *Catholick* signifies *Universal*, containing all that are in the Church (that is in God the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ) in all Times, and those were not all of the same Mind in all Things, as may be read in the Holy Scriptures, and also in *Eusebius* and other *Ecclesiastical Histories*, where Men are commended for Holiness and Virtue, yet at much Difference in some Things. *Synefius*, though he believed not the *Resurrection*, was chosen to minister, and afterward was made a Bishop, the Charity of *Christians* was so great in that Age. And some accounted *Hereticks*, suffered Martyrdom, that are commended or excused by *Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 1. 3 c. 28* *Eusebius*; one in particular that dyed with *Polycarpus*, and another called *Asclepius*, called *Marcionites*. See also the Beginning of his eighth Book concerning the *Divisions* among them that afterward suffered for the Testimony of the Universal or *Catholick Truth*; nor can we receive their Judgment, that branded those with the Name of *Hereticks*, *Pelagians*, &c. who denied *Swearing* in those declining *Ages*, and suppressed their Works under that Name and Aspersions on-faith *Gennadius* who lived soon after him; not allowing them to speak for themselves to us of latter Times.

Pelagius, a *Britan*, Anno 400. wrote Notable Books

We see how unjustly we our selves are aspersed in almost every Doctrine we hold, and that under pretence of serving God; particularly, with seeking to work our *Salvation* by our own Power, and when they have

1 Thes. 1. 1.
Phil. 3. 15.
Soc. 1. 6. c. 13
Evagr. 1. 1. cap 11. c. 9.

have made us this belief, they bestow *Pelagianism* upon it (for Fathers have Right to name their own Children) whereas of all other People, we especially disclaim our own *Ability*, and wait to be renewed and guided by the Spirit of Christ, and to be found in his Righteousness, and therefore on the other hand reputed *Phanatics*, *Enthusiasts*, &c. and mocked for being moved by the Spirit, following the Light, &c. But let their Example or Authority be as it will, or however they were in other Respects, the Doctrine of the ancient *primitive* Fathers, and Practice of that Church, as also the Doctrine of famous Men among themselves, neither of which Sort dare they condemn for *Hereticks*, do sufficiently defend them from the Aspersions of *Heresie* in that Particular: And so we shall come to our remaining *Testimonies*, it being our Business, not to maintain every one of their *Principles* we cite; but this Doctrine of *Swear not at all*, to have had the Voice of several Ages to confirm it.

The ancient *Waldenses*, reputed to have continued *Uncorrupted* with the Grossness of the *Apostacy*, ever since the Apostles Times (see their History in P. Perin, S. Moreland and Bishop *Usher de Success*) we have good Cause to say, *denied the taking of any Oath in what Sense the * Primitive Christians and Fathers refused, and that was altogether.* Sure, their Enemies charged them with it

* See *Baronius*, An. 1310. *Joh Waldens.* against *John Wickliff* and *Waldenses*. *Reiner. Rub.* *Caprain.* *W. Widford.* *Gui. Carmel.* *Voss. Histor.* *Pelag. l. 5. p. 2*

for

for above Three Hundred Years, and we cannot find they then denyed the Charge : We suppose none will attempt to prove they did ; Though one of our *Adversaries* joins with theirs, traducing them for *Perjurers*, and with them abuses that worthy and learned Man Bishop *Usher*, who defends them from that improbable and contradictory Aspersiō, of *Lying and Forswearing*, and yet of *Denying to Swear* ; who says, *that they were as far from Lying and Forswearing, as their Enemies were from Modesty and Truth*, which did appear in that they were charg'd by them, *Not to Swear at all* : Peruse that part of his Book *de Successione*, where he treats of them ; and where also you may read of their Successiō, how that the *Syrians* and *Armenians* came out of the East into *Thracia*, thence in process of Time into *Bulgaria* and *Sclavonia*, thence into *Italy* and *Lumbardy*, and were called by several Names, of several People, or at several Times, as *Manichees*, *Waldenses*, *Albigenses*, *Cathari* or *Puritans*, *Patrins*, *Publicans*, *Humiliati*, &c. who were charged with *denying Swearing* ; And how that several of the better sort of the Clergy, and of the nobler Laity (who refused the present use of *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*) were burnt under the Name of *Manichees*. *Suarez* also reckons up the *Catharists*, *Alba*, *Bagnald*, and others which *Prateolus* and *Castro* relate, the *Waldenses*, the *Anabaptists*, &c. And

Bp. *Usher* de
Success.

de Jurament.
l. 1. c. 1, 2.

And which *Jansenius* also out of *Augustine*, Epist. 89. the *Pelagians* out of *Hilary Syracusanus*, Epist. 88. *Bernard* homil. 69. on Cant. *The Fathers*, says he, seem to favour this Opinion, especially *Basil*, hom. in Psalm, 14. *Chrysostom* hom. 19. 78. ad popul. and 17. on Mat. And *Theophylact* on Mat. 5, *Origen Tract.* 35. Mat. *Tertullian de Idololat.* *Clem. Rom. l. 6. Constitut. Apost.* *Maldonat* on Mat. 5. 34. saith, the *Anabaptists*, the *Wickliffists*, some *Syracusians*, a kind of *Pelagians*, denied Swearing, and that *Origen* was not far off that Opinion. Here the *Hereticks*, as accounted, and the *Fathers* are reckoned up together, as holding the same Opinions: Sure in this they were not *Hereticks*; for then the *Fathers* should be condemned with them, and called *Hereticks* too, as well as they, or else these Men are partial and contradictory.

August. on *Jam.* 5. of the words of the Apostle, thus, *Ser.* 30. 'Perhaps it is meet 'for the Lord *alone* to swear, who cannot forswear. And so he goes on to shew how hard it is for men to avoid Perjury.

In *Serm.* 3. *ad competentes*: 'Let them 'not only abstain from Perjury, but from 'Swearing; because he doth not Lye, who 'saith, *A man swearing much, shall not depart from Iniquity, and the Plague shall not depart from his House, Eccles.* 23.

But

But if it were an *August Act* of the Worship of God, he would on the contrary have exhorted at least, if not commanded them to swear, which we never read any Command for, but in Opposition to Idols, even in the time of the Old-Testament-Writings, as the Testimonies before alledged declare, and in the time of the New, no Command at all ; but on the contrary a Prohibition by the Lord himself, and another by his Apostle, nor any Example ; for that of *Paul's* was but an Asseveration, as by the Testimonies already produced, and to be alledged appears: For besides those of the *Fathers* and other *Doctors*, of late Bishop *Robert Sanderson* in his *Oxford Lectures*, shows, that is sometimes used in the Form of an Oath, which is no Oath ; and so he defendeth *Joseph* from breaking God's Command, that is, not to have sworn so ; and therefore not to have sinned, but to have used an Asseveration, as if he had said, *as sure as Pharaoh liveth ye are Spi:s* : So may *Paul* be defended against the breaking Christ's Command, as if he had said, *as sure as ye*, or as some *Greek Copies* have it, *We Rejoyce in Christ Jesus* : For *νη*, which they translate, *I protest by*, hath sometimes the same signification that *ναι*, *yea*, hath, as may be seen in *Scapula* ; For he says, *νη* (translated, *I protest by*) is a Particle, sometimes of *granting* and *affirming* ; sometimes it

Agreeing
with *Chrysostom*.

it is put for *verily, indeed*; and he interprets *ναὶ* by the same word, which is translated *yea*, which *Scapula* saith, is also sometimes used in Swearing, and cites *Aristophanes* and *Xenophon* for it: And that *νᾷ* is used also in Composition, for affirming, as in *νύχυστος*, *profusus, lavishing*; which cannot signify Swearing.

And how easily might the Transcriber, through that common Use, alter a Letter, being of the same signification, seeing in that very Verse, in some Copies, there is not only in another word an Alteration of a Letter *ἡμετέραν* and *ὑμετέραν*, *our* and *your*, but in another word five Letters, *σποδνήσκα* and *σποδνήσκοντες*, referring it to the Verse before; yea, a whole word of Seven Letters added, *ἀδελφοὶ*. And of about Thirty Greek Copies there are not Two of them that agree, but they interfer, some in one place, some in another; insomuch that there are Thousands of various Readings, which many of the Ancient Fathers diversly follow, some one, some another. See the (various Lectiōnes) *Varia Lectiōnes Græci Novi Testamenti*. in Bp. Walton's *Polyglot*, vol. 6. also the *Preface*, and *Beza's Epistle* therein: And consider how hard a thing it is to construe, limit, and lay the Interpretation of the Sayings of Christ and his Apostles, and the Weight of a Doctrine, and that as men would avoid Penalties too, upon a Letter (which yet alters not the

Signification) upon Credit of the Transcribers, especially in *Paul's* Epistles, wherein *Peter* says, *many things are hard to be understood, and wrested by the Unlearned*, which he must needs intend in such *Learning* as he himself had, and that was not of *Worldly Academies*; but from the Holy Spirit. And these words, which are joyned with that Particle, are not such words as men use in Swearing, but for a Ground of his Fidelity, and a Remedy against their Incredulity, and questioning of the Weight of his Assertions, amongst whom other Teachers were preferred, and who compelled him to speak *as a Fool*, he says, *even to commend himself*. So that it is not strange, if to them, and not to other Churches, he used such forcible Asseverations from the Testimony that they had of him, of the Truth and Work of Christ in him, and the Record thereof upon his Soul, and his Joy therein, that he speak the Truth to them, and did not lye; so that he brings his Perfections against their Imperfections, to gain Belief, which can amount to no more than a voluntary Condescension for the time being, and cannot prove or countenance a Compulsory, Promissory, Formal, Ceremonial *Oath* to be exacted or taken up for the future.

But mark, that the word *Oath* or *Swear*, used both by Christ and the Apostle *James* in their Prohibition, is never used by *Paul* in

in his Affeuerations, neither doth he ever apply it to the Brethren ; but speaking to them of the Oath that was in old time, and of men (indefinitely) that use to swear, he saith, *Men swear, and to them an Oath is for Confirmation* ; that is, as among the *Jews* and *Heathen* ; he doth not say to *Us*, or to *You* ; or *We*, or *Ye* swear, who are not in Strife, which, if it had been true, it might have stood the present *Oath-Advocates* in stead : So that such as will have it, that *Paul* swore, must bring the word *swear* or *Oath* to prove it ; But if they could, his Example then were not enough to invalidate to us now the Command of Christ, for the abolishing of Swearing, no more than his *shaving* his Head at *Cenchrea*, because he had a Vow ; or his *purifying* himself in the Temple, and *offering* with the four *Jews* that had a Vow ; or his *circumcising* of *Timothy*, because of the *Jews*, can warrant us to the Observation of those legal Rites and Ceremonies, which so long since are not only *dead* but *deadly*, as the Fathers and Bp. *Sunderfon* distinguish about them. And those that would therefore bring in *Swearing* and *Vows*, might under the same Colour, bring in *Sacrificing* and *Circumcising* too.

LIV. ISIDORUS PELUSIOTA, who L. I. c. 15, as *Evagrius Schol.* writes, lived at the same time with *Cyril*, and that the Fame of his

Ep. lib. 1.
Epist. 155.

Not to re-
quire an Oath
by any means
of another
man.

Sayings and Doings was spread far and near,
and rise in every man's Mouth, *that he led
on Earth the Life of an Angel*, and wrote
many notable Works, amongst which are his
Epistles, in one whereof he writeth against
Swearing thus ; ' If thou art of our Flock,
' and art ordered under a good Shepherd,
' deny the Nature of Wild Beasts, and
' obey his Voice *that forbiddeth to Swear*
' **AT ALL.** Moreover not to Swear is,
' *not to require an Oath of another* : Now,
' if thou wilt not swear, neither require
' thou an Oath of another, for two Causes ;
' either because he who is asked, loves
' Truth, or on the contrary to Lye : If the
' man speaks Truth usually, *he will always*
' *speak Truth without an Oath* ; but if he is
' a Lyar, *he will Lye, though he Swear* :
' Therefore for both these Causes, *one ought*
' *not to require an Oath.*

On Mat. 5.

LV. CHROMATIUS, Bishop of A-
quileia, about or not long after that time,
upon these words, *But I say unto you, Swear
not at all*, paraphraseth thus ; ' The Law
' (saith he) given by *Moses* received a
' Growth, Proficiency or *Perfection* by the
' Grace of the Doctrine of the Gospel. In
' the Law it was commanded, not to For-
' swear ; *but in the Gospel NOT TO*
' **SWEAR** : Which very thing hereto-
' fore the Holy Ghost did premeditate that
' *Solomon* should command or teach, saying,
' *Let*

' *Let not thy Mouth use to Swear.* And a-
 ' gain, As a Servant beaten continually, is
 ' not lessened from the Paleness of his
 ' Stripes ; so every one that sweareth, shall
 ' not be purg'd from Sin. *Wherefore it is*
 ' *not meet for us to Swear AT ALL:* For,
 ' what need is there for any of us to Swear,
 ' seeing that it is not at all *LAWFUL*
 ' *FOR US TO LYE* ; whose words
 ' ought always to be so True, so *very Faith-*
 ' *ful, that they may be accounted for Oaths.*
 ' And therefore the Lord not only forbids
 ' us to Forswear, *BUT EVEN TO*
 ' *SWEAR* ; that we may not seem to
 ' speak Truth *ONLY* when we swear ;
 ' That we may not think, that those whom
 ' he hath appointed to be True in all their
 ' Speech, may have Liberty to Lye without
 ' an Oath : For this is the Cause of an
 ' Oath, Because that every one who swear-
 ' eth, doth swear to this End, that he will
 ' speak that which is true, and therefore
 ' the Lord would have no Difference to be
 ' *between their Oath and their Word : Because*
 ' *as in an Oath there ought to be no Perfidious-*
 ' *ness, so in our Words there ought to be no*
 ' *Lye*, in that both Perjury and Lying is
 ' condemned by the Punishment of the
 ' Judgment of God, seeing the Scripture
 ' saith, *The Mouth which Lyeth, killeth the*
 ' *Soul* : Therefore whosoever speaketh Truth,
 ' sweareth ; because it is written, *A Faith-*
 ' *ful Witnes doth not Lye.* And therefore

*Suspicion the
 Cause of an
 Oath.*

' Holy Scripture (not without Cause) often
 ' relates, *that God hath sworn*, because what-
 ' soever is spoaken of God, who is True,
 ' and cannot lye, is counted for an Oath,
 ' because all which he speaks, is true——
 ' Now we find God sometimes swearing,
 ' but it is for the Perfidiousness of the Jew-
 ' ish Infidelity, who think that all Truth
 ' consists in the Credit of an Oath; There-
 ' fore also God would swear, that they who
 ' would not trust God speaking, might trust
 ' him when he swore: Therefore our Lord
 ' saith, *Ye have heard it said of old, Thou*
 ' *shalt not Forswear; But I say unto you,*
 ' **SWEAR NOT AT ALL, &c.**

On Deut. 6. LVI. THEODORET on Deut. 6.

pag. 57. ' Why doth the Law command,

' A smart and
true Answer.

' that they should swear by God? *Lest they*
 ' *should swear by false Gods:* For he said
 ' the same by the Prophet, *If thou takest the*
 ' *Names of Baalam out of thy Mouth, and*
 ' *shalt swear, The Lord liveth with Truth:*
 ' And here, when he had said, *Thou shalt fear*
 ' *the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou*
 ' *serve, and shalt cleave unto him, and shalt*
 ' *swear by his Name;* he subjoyned, *Ye shall*
 ' *not walk after other or strange Gods, which*
 ' *are of the Gods of the Nations, which are*
 ' *round about you.* Lyra saith the same.

Rabanus.

LVII. Ordinary Gloss, on Mat. 5. 37. hath
 this Sentence, ' *A Faithful Speech ought to be*
 ' *accounted for an Oath.*

LVIII. Jo-

LVIII. *Johannes Damascenus*, Parallel. lib. 3. cap. 16. bringeth a Testimony of one *Nilus*, against *Swearing*. There was one nam'd *NILUS* in *Egypt*, a Martyr, mentioned by *Eusebius*. Another Bishop of *Constantinople*, spoaken of by *Socrates*, both very famous; the words are these: ' *It is Nilus forbids*
' *not profitable to Swear, but very pernicious, Oaths,*
' *and execrable and abominable: wherefore*
' *hereafter make an End of Swearing; nor*
' *commit such a thing, as that thy Tongue use*
' *Oaths.* In the same place he alledgeth Testimonies out of *J. Chrysostom*, Hom. 13. *ad Populum Antiochenum.*

LIX. *CYRILL*, whom *Evagrius Scho-* On Jer. 4:
last. styles *Renown'd*, in his Commentary on *Jeremy* the 4th; *And shall swear, the Lord liveth in Truth, and in Judgment, and in Righteousness*; saith, ' *Let us look, who*
' *swear, how we do not swear in Judgment,*
' *but without Judgment; so that our Oaths*
' *are by Custom rather than Judgment; we*
' *are lashed therefore, and the Word repro-*
' *ving that same thing, saith, and if he*
' *shall swear the Lord liveth in Truth, in*
' *Righteousness and Judgment: For we know*
' *it is said in the Gospel by the Lord unto*
' *his Disciples, But I say unto you, that you*
' *swear NOT AT ALL.* But let us con-
' *sider also this Saying, and if God grant,*
' *both shall be rewarded: For, perhaps it*

‘ first behoveth to swear in Truth, in Judg-
 ‘ ment, and in Righteousness; and after
 ‘ one hath made Proficiency, *he may be made*
 ‘ *worthy* NOT TO SWEAR AT ALL,
 ‘ but may have YEA, *not needing Witnesses*
 ‘ *that* IT IS SO; and may have NAY,
 ‘ *not needing Witnesses that* IT IS VERI-
 ‘ LY NOT SO.

Cyrl. see Ca-
 sena. 65. *Grac*
 Patr. on Luk.
 I. p. 23.

And says Cyrill further, ‘ Let none be-
 ‘ cause he hears that God swore to *Abra-*
 ‘ *ham*, use to swear: For, as that which is
 ‘ called *Wrath* in God, is not Wrath; nor
 ‘ doth it signifie a Passion, but a Punishing
 ‘ Power, or some such like Motion: so
 ‘ neither is Swearing, SWEARING:
 ‘ For, God doth not Swear; but shews the
 ‘ Certainty, that what he saith shall come
 ‘ to pass certainly: For the Oath of God
 ‘ is his own Word, filling the Hearers, and
 ‘ making every one believe, that what he
 ‘ hath promised and said, shall surely come
 ‘ to pass.

On Psal. 94.
 agreeth with
 Augustine.

LX. CASSIODORUS, on Psalm 94.
 saith, ‘ Hence it is, that men are forbidden
 ‘ to swear, because by their own Power
 ‘ they cannot perform their Promises. This
 Cassiodorus was Famous about the Year
 500,

On Eccles. 8.

LXI. OLYMPIODORUS was also Fa-
 mous about the same time, who, on Eccl.
 8. saith thus, ‘ Keep the Mouth of the
 ‘ King

‘ King and don’t study concerning the Word
 ‘ of the Oath of God, but go far from the
 ‘ Face of it, viz. of an Oath, that is, Re-
 ‘ frain and depart from it, and do not AT
 ‘ ALL endure to take an Oath into thy
 ‘ Mouth.

LXII. *ISIDORUS HISPALENSIS* was famous about that time, and liv’d with him they call’d St. Gregory, who disliked the bringing in the Title of *Universal Bishop*, and also the Ute of Swearing: his Words are these, ‘ Many are slow to believe, which Chap. 31.
 ‘ are moved at the Belief of the Word : But
 ‘ they do grievously offend, who compel them to
 ‘ Swear that speak to them.

LXIII. *ANTIOCHUS*, said to be a Man famous for Holiness and Learning, living in *Pelastine* about the time of *Heraclius*, the Emperor, that was about the Year 614. In his *Pandects* of Scripture, *Hom.* 62. concerning Swearing saith thus in the Greek (which see; for the *Latin* Translation is in some things imperfect) ‘ The old Law,
 ‘ as giving Laws to Children, which for
 ‘ their Age were not capable of more Holy
 ‘ Doctrine, not unseasonably commands,
 ‘ To Swear nothing to their Neighbour in
 ‘ Deceit ; But us our Lord and Saviour com-
 ‘ mandeth, NOT TO SWEAR AT
 ‘ ALL, neither out of Season nor in Season;
 ‘ for he saith to us, Let your YEA be YEA,
 ‘ and

‘ *and your NAY, NAY ; for whatsoever is
‘ more, is of the Evil.*

And saith he to the first People of a Stiff
‘ Neck, I commanded, *Thou shalt not for-
‘ swear, but shalt perform thy Vows unto the
‘ Lord*, as to them that were Hard-hearted
‘ and Disobedient to me : *But to you that
‘ believe in me, to whom I have given Power
‘ to become the Sons of God, that are born a-
‘ gain of the Holy Spirit, I command NOT
‘ TO SWEAR AT ALL*, neither little,
‘ nor great Oaths ; that a Difference may
‘ plainly appear who are Bastards, and
‘ who true Sons. Let us therefore, Dear
‘ Friends, fear him, who hath vouchsafed
‘ us so much Honour, even the Lord and
‘ Father, with all Fear ; as sincere ingenious
‘ Servants let us keep his Commandments,
‘ *NOT TO SWEAR AT ALL*, lest he
‘ say, as in Isa. i. *I have nourish’d and
‘ brought up Children, and they have rebell’d
‘ against me* : Let’s us not be Sleighters
‘ and Despisers of this Commandment of
‘ the Lord ; for those things that are said
‘ and done *without an Oath*, are more cre-
‘ dited by Men, and more pleasing to God.

LXIV. In the next Century, *BEDA*, an
Beda in Ep. English man, the most famous of those Days,
Jam. c. 5. and styl’d Venerable, in his Exposition upon
these words, *Before all things, my Brethren,
swear not*, &c. saith, ‘ Because he desires en-
tirely to draw out the deadly Poison of the
‘ Tongue

' Tongue in his Hearers, he forbad to de-
 ' tract or slander any man, or to judge his
 ' Neighbour, who forbad to grieve in Ad-
 ' versities, which are open Sins; he adds
 ' this also (seeming light to some) that he
 ' may take away the Custom of *Swearing*.
 ' For that this also is not to be esteem'd a
 ' light matter, plainly appears to them,
 ' that carefully consider that Sentence of
 ' the Lord, where he saith, *Of every idle*
 ' *Word that Men shall speak, they shall give*
 ' *account in the Day of Judgment.*

[*That ye fall not into Condemnation*]
 ' Therefore (saith he) I restrain you from the
 ' Fault of *Swearing*, lest by *Swearing* fre-
 ' quently true things, ye fall sometimes al-
 ' so into *Forswearing*; but stand so far
 ' from the Vice of *Forswearing*, that you
 ' will not *Swear* neither, but by the greatest
 ' Necessity. But he also falls under the
 ' Judgment of Guilt, who although he ne-
 ' ver *Forswear*, yet *swareth true oftner than*
 ' *there is need*; namely, he offends in the
 ' very Idleness of superfluous Speech, and
 ' he offendeth the Judge, which forbad both
 ' every unprofitable **Word** and **OATH**.

From this chief man among the *English*
 of that time, it is manifest, that this was
 the Doctrine they then held, as further ap-
 pears from *H. Spelman*, that learn'd *English*
 Knight, in his Book of *Brittish Councils*, *Spelm. Brit. Council. p.*
Canons, &c. in the *Exceptions or select Col. 260.*
lections

lections of Egbert, Arch-Bishop of York, Artic. 19. That no Priest whatsoever may swear an Oath, but let him speak all things simply, in Purity and Truth. And in the same Author and Council, Art. 18. the chief of Monasteries, Priests and Deacons should say (without Swearing) when they were to purge and clear themselves, only thus, I speak the Truth in Christ, I lye not.

And in pag. 259. In England, at the Council of Berghamsted about the Year 750. Artic. 17. *That a Bishop or a King's Word or Affirmation without an Oath is irrefragable.*

This agrees with *Blastaris Canons* above-mention'd. And at this Day in some Countries, as the *Electoral Arch-Bishops* in Germany, of *Cologne, Mentz and Triers*, and many Noble Men in their Station, speak without an Oath upon their Honour, &c.

Certainly then it is much below the Nobility of true Christians in their Spiritual Station to Swear, as *Chrysostom* and the Ancients have well observ'd.

LXV. *HAIMO* lived about 840. who on the *Revelations* saith, ' That it's lawful ' only for God and Angels to Swear ; but to ' Men it is forbidden.

LXVI. *AMBROSIVS ANSBERTUS, Gallus Presbyter* : ' Seeing the Lord ' prohibits the Faithful from every Oath, ' saying Swear not at all, neither by Heaven, ' &c.

' &c, but let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay,
 ' Nay; what abounds more than them is
 ' from the Evil: Who stretcheth out his
 ' Hand to Heaven, and sweareth by Him
 ' that liveth for ever. Are not his Sayings
 ' and Actings set for Examples for Believers
 ' to imitate? But only in that Men are
 ' often deceived by an Oath; but he, who
 ' is the Truth, never is deceived; for he
 ' would not have prohibited men from an
 ' Oath, if he had not known Sin to be in
 ' it: For, what do we understand to be fi-
 ' gured by the Hand of the Angel, unless
 ' (as before noted) a Dispensation of Re-
 ' demption of Mankind? For, his Hand
 ' is the Operation of our Salvation; al-
 ' though also, if it may be so said, the same
 ' Son by his Right-Hand, as when the
 ' Word of the Father speaketh, he sheweth
 ' that he is the Word of the Father.

On the Reve-
lations, p. 196

LXVII. THEOPHYLACT, Arch-
 Bishop of the *Bulgarians*, whom some place
 in the Ninth Century, others after; to be
 sure very Famous, being as it were their
 Apostle; in his Comment on *Mat. 5.* saith,
 ' To swear, or adjure more to Yea or Nay,
 ' is of the Devil. Moreover (says he) if
 ' thou should'st say, *That the Law also given*
 ' *to Moses was evil, because it commandeth*
 ' *to swear*, Learn, that *then* it was not Evil
 ' to swear; *but after Christ, it is Evil*, as
 ' also to be circumcised; and in brief, what-
 ' soever

* He makes 'soever is * *Jewish* : For, it is convenient
Oaths Jewish, 'for a Child to suck, but not at all for a
 at least in Op- ' Man.
 position to E-

vangelical; be-
 cause imper-
 fect, and per-
 mitted to the
Jews in Con-
 descension.

LXVIII. *BERNARD* ; ' The Truth
 ' needs not an Oath. *De modo bene viven-*
di, Ser. 32. *De Perjurio*. ' A faithful
 ' Word holds the place of an Oath ; as he
 ' cannot Lye who doth not Speak, so he
 ' cannot Forswear, who doth not undertake
 ' to Swear : grounded on *Matthew* 5.

LXIX. *PASCHATIUS RATBERTUS*
 on Mat 5. *Ye have heard*, &c. ' In this
 ' place, as also every where in those things,
 ' the Perfection in Righteousness is renew-
 ' ed ; for by what every one swears, he either
 ' worships, loveth or fears it ; Therefore by
 ' the Law, for the carnal People it was law-
 ' ful to swear by God, and this was allow-
 ' ed as to little ones, that as they offered
 ' Sacrifices to God, lest they should offer
 ' them to *Idols* ; so also it was permitted to
 ' them to swear by God : Not that they did
 ' this well ; but because it was better to
 ' give it to God than to Devils.

LXX. *OTHO BRUNFELSIUS* on
 Mat. 5. *But let your Word be Yea*, &c.
 ' That is the Duty of a *Christian* Man, to
 ' be so sure in his Words, that being Un-
 ' sworn he surpasses any *Jew* or *Heathen*, swear-
 ' ing by all his Holy Things, namely in
 ' these

‘ these bare Words only, *Yea, Yea; Nay,*
 ‘ *Nay* : Such Faithfulness and Constancy is
 ‘ commended in good men by prophane
 ‘ Authors ; Read *Seneca, Cicero, Valerius*
 ‘ *Maximus.*

‘ But thou wilt say, *I shall not be trusted,*
 ‘ *unless I swear* : Even so it is permitted by
 ‘ the Popes, to swear good Words in a good
 ‘ Cause. But such Distrust ought not to
 ‘ reign in the Faithful : But if we trust not
 ‘ Words, what should an Oath do ? It is a
 ‘ Proverb, *None is less trusted, than he which*
 ‘ *shall often swear.* Moreover, *Who gave*
 ‘ *Power to Popes, to break the Command of*
 ‘ *God.*

LXXI. DRUTHMARUS on Mat.
 5. ‘ Lest the Jews should Swear by Idols
 ‘ Names, the Lord suffered them to swear by
 ‘ his own Name.

‘ ——— The Lord taught us Perfection,
 ‘ that such Trust is to be among *Christians,*
 ‘ *that there should be no need to interpose the*
 ‘ *Name of God for Witness.*

LXXII. JANSENIUS on Mat. 5.
 ‘ If all *Christians* were such as they ought
 ‘ to be, it would certainly be needless both
 ‘ to require and take an Oath—— I think
 ‘ this more *Christian* ; and not to swear at all,
 ‘ nor compel to Swear, more *Spiritual*——
 ‘ *Yea* and *Amen* are the same, 2 Cor. 1. not
 ‘ Swearing but Affirming : So Christ swore
 ‘ not. See

See *Bernard*, Hom. 69. in Cant. *De more bene vivendi*, Serm. 32.

LXXIII. *ALBERTUS MAGNUS*, on Mat. 5. 'Swearing is by Indulgence.
Thomas Aquinas cites *Rabanus* on Mat. 5.

LXXIV. *Alex. de Ales* citeth *HUG.* p. 3. q. 59. *CARDINAL*, saying, 'The Lord Forbad Swearing, lest any should desire to swear as a Good Thing, also that none might fall into Perjury.

LXXV. *REMIGIUS* on *Rom.* 1. 'Who never Swears, never Forswears.

LXXVI. *RUFFINUS* on *Psal.* 14.
'Not to Swear at all is of Perfect Men.
See also *Smaragdus* on Mat. 5.
Titelmannus on *Psal.* 14.
Brugensis on Mat. 5.
Ludolphus Carthusianus, vita Christi, part 2. cap 12.
Rupertus, de operibus spiritus sancti. f. 453
Baptista Folengius, on *Psal.* 15.
Nic. Lyræ and *Ordinary Gloss* on Mat. 5.

See *Bibliotheca veter. Patrum.*

LXXVII. *EUTHYMIUS ZAGABONUS*, on Mat. 5, p. 43. saith thus; Again, ye have heard, that it hath been said to them of old time, Thou shalt not Forswear, &c. but I say unto you, Swear not at all, &c.
'Now the Old Law saith, Thou shalt not Forswear,

mo. ' Forswear, but shalt offer to the Lord thine
 ' Oaths, which he added, that he might
 ' put Fear into the Swearer, that he should
 , oh ' not Forswear, knowing that God, which
 ' knows all things, undertakes the Oath.

5. ' [But I say unto you, Swear not at all] For
 ' he that easily sweareth, sometimes per-
 2 G. ' chance may Forswear, by the Custom of
 For- ' Swearing; but he that Swears by no
 ' means, will never Forswear. Besides,
 ' thou that swearest, so be thou do not
 ' Forswear, thou observest the Worship of
 ' God; but Swearing by no means, thou
 i. ' dost promote it: And the other is the part
 ' of mean and imperfect Philosophy; *but*
 ' *this of that which is the highest and perfect.*

14. ' The other, *Thou shalt not Forswear*, is writ-
 ' ten in the Book of *Exodus*; but this,
 ' *Thou shalt restore to the Lord thine Oaths*,
 ' in the Book of *Deuteronomy*, but in other
 ' words: Now he commanded this, lest
 ' they should swear by Gods of a False
 ' Name. Again,

53 ' Not to Swear, and not to require an
 ' Oath, comes to the same thing: For,
 5. ' how canst thou induce thy Brother un-
 ' to that, which thou avoidest thy self;
 0- ' if so be that thou art a Lover of thy Bro-
 A- ' ther, and not rather of Money?

nil ' Nor by Heaven; for it is the Throne of
 ar, God, &c.

cc. ' Lest they should think, that he forbade
 ' to swear by God only, in saying, *By God*,

' he adds also other kind of Oaths, by which
 ' then the *Jews* did swear; for he that swear-
 ' eth by these things, sweareth again by
 ' God, who fills these things, and rules
 ' them; for they have these things in Ho-
 ' nour for him, and not for themselves; for
 ' he saith by the Prophet, *Heaven is my*
 ' *Throne, and the Earth is my Foot-stool*; the
 ' Prophet manifesting by this, that God
 ' filleth all things: *Do not I fill Heaven and*
 ' *Earth?* *David* also saith, The City of the
 ' Great King.

Neither by thy Head.

' Therefore thou shouldst *not swear the*
 ' *meanest Oath*; I say, even by thy own
 ' Head, lest thou proceed to greater, or
 ' by any other manner; for the Creature is
 ' also the Possession of God; And again the
 ' Oath is made by God, who hath it (the
 ' Creature) in his Power; for, although it
 ' (the Head) be made thine, yet it is not
 ' thy Work, which is manifest from this,
 ' That thou canst not make one Hair white
 ' or black.

But let your Words be Yea, Yea; Nay, Nay, &c.

' Let your Speech be when ye affirm, *Yea*;
 ' and when ye deny, *Nay*; and use only
 ' these for, or instead of Oaths to Confir-
 ' mation, and no other than *Yea* and *Nay*;
 ' what is adjoyned besides these, he calleth
 ' an Oath.

‘ Quest.

‘ *Quest. But if an Oath be of the Devil, how did the Old Law permit it ?*

Ans. ‘ Because the Sacrifices of Living Creatures were also of Evil, and by the Deceit of Idols ; yet the Law permitted them, *because of the * Infirmity of the Hebrews* : For, whereas they were Gluttons and Smell-Feasts, they lov’d the Sacrifices of Idols ; and whereas also they were Unbelieving, they also loved an Oath : And that they should not afterwards either sacrifice to Idols, or swear by Idols, the Law permitted them to sacrifice and to swear ; and if there were any thing else of that kind, they transferred all unto God. Now it was to come to pass, that in process of time, he would cut off these things also, by a more sublime Law to be brought in ; because it is good for Infants to be suckled ; but for men it is very unfit : There we allow this to them that live after the manner of Infants ; but we withdraw or prohibit them that are Manly from it.

They all agree in the Reason of suffering Oaths under the Law, viz. the Jews Weakness.

‘ *Quest. What then is to be done, if any require an Oath, yea, compel to Swear ?*

Ans. ‘ Let the Fear of God be more forcible than this Compulsion or Necessity ; and chuse rather to suffer all things, than to transgress the Command, sith in every Precept Force and Violent Danger will often meet with thee : And unless thou esteamest the Command of God every

‘ where more forcible, all things will de-
 ‘ part from thee Void and Unperformed.
 ‘ In the following Passages the Lord saith,
 ‘ *The Kingdom of Heaven suffered Violence, and*
 ‘ *the Violent take it by Force.*

LXXVIII. OECUMENIUS, a Fa-
 mous Greek Writer, about Ann. 1070.
 writes on Jam. 5. 12. thus, ‘ But some
 ‘ will say, *If any be forced to swear, what is*
 ‘ *to be done?* We say, that the Fear of
 ‘ God shall be stronger than the Force of
 ‘ him that compels. But some may doubt,
 ‘ *How it comes to pass, that Grace doth not*
 ‘ *command this, as did the Old Law, afford-*
 ‘ *ing Praise to him that did swear by the Name*
 ‘ *of the Lord?* We say, The Old Law
 ‘ leading the Jews not to swear by Devils,
 ‘ appointed to swear by God, as it command-
 ‘ ed them to sacrifice, drawing them from
 ‘ the Sacrifice of Idols or Devils: But
 ‘ when it had sufficiently taught them to have
 ‘ a Religious Respect to God, then it rejec-
 ‘ ted Sacrifices as unprofitable, seeking not a
 ‘ Sacrifice by Beasts, but a Broken Spirit;
 ‘ that is a sweet whole Burnt-Sacrifice, en-
 ‘ flamed by the Fire of Love. That ye fall
 ‘ not into Hypocrisie (so some Copies have
 ‘ it; for the Words in Greek are something
 ‘ alike) *Hypocrisie* he saith, or Condemna-
 ‘ tion, which follows them that Swear
 ‘ without sparing, and through the Custom
 ‘ of Oaths are carried out to Forswear. The
 ‘ Word

‘ Word *Hypocrisie* signifies thus much, that
 ‘ which being one thing appears another ;
 ‘ How then falleth he into Hypocrisie that
 ‘ sweareth ?

Ans. ‘ When he that is believed for the
 ‘ Oath’s sake to be true, and yet Trans-
 ‘ gression following, is declared to be a
 ‘ Lyar, instead of a True Man, not produ-
 ‘ cing *Yea* in Certainty. He forbids to
 ‘ swear by God, because of Perjury ; but
 ‘ by Heaven and other Oaths, that men
 ‘ should not bring these things into the
 ‘ Honour of God ; for all that swear, do
 ‘ swear by the Greater.

LXXIX. *ANSHELMUS*, Bishop of
 Canterbury, about Ann. 1090. on that place
 of *Mat.* 5. thus, pag. 38. *Thou shalt not*
For swear, &c. ‘ *Moses* seeing that he could
 ‘ not take away Swearing, takes away Per-
 ‘ jury. And again, ‘ Because men have in
 ‘ great Reverence those things by which
 ‘ they swear, lest they should make the
 ‘ Creatures Gods to themselves, he com-
 ‘ mands them, *to render their Oaths to God,*
 ‘ *and not to swear by Creatures :* But the
 ‘ Lord removes them more perfectly from
 ‘ Perjury, *when he forbids them to swear at*
 ‘ *all.*

Vid. Baron.
 Anno 1310.
Joh. Waldens.
adv. Wicklif. &
Waldens. Rei-
ner. Rub. Can-
pitan. W.

LXXX. The Ancient *WALDENSES*
 we have good Cause to say, *Deny’d the ta-*
king of any Oath in what Sense the Primi-

tive *Christians* and *Fathers* refused, and that was *altogether*: To be sure their *Enemies* charged them with it for above Three Hundred Years; and we cannot find, that they then deny'd the Charge: We suppose none will attempt to prove they did; for they were well known in the World as to this Particular.

De Success.
1. 6.

LXXXI. And Bp. *USHER* pleads for them against the *Papists*, who were Swearers.

Bar. Anno
1310, n. 3.

LXXXII. Likewise, a People of *Albi* in *France*, Ann. 1176. held, 'It was *Unlawful to Swear*.

J. Fox Mart.
v. 1. p. 527.

LXXXIII. The *Plowman's Complaint*, containing, as abundance of mournful Applications to God, so many notable and serious Reprehensions of the Lap't, Erroneous and Cruel Nature of Men; among others it hath this notable Passage to our Purpose, 'Lord, thou gavest us a Command of Truth, in bidding us say, *Yea, Yea*; 'and *Swear for nothing*, but, Lord, he ' (Pope) that calls himself *thy Vicar on Earth*, hath broken the Commandment, 'so makes a Law to compel men to Swear. Who was the Author of this, is not certainly known; but to be sure it was embraced of the *Wickliffians*, as worthy of their Patronage; and remembred and recorded by

Men honoured
by Protestants.

John

John Fox, as not unworthy to keep Company with *Protestant Martyrs*.

LXXXIV. JOHN WICKLIFF, our *J. Fox Mart* Country-man, and in his time *Divinity-* v. 1. p. 554, *Professor of Oxford*, (Famous for his Learning and Godly Courage in oppugning the Doctrines and Practices of *Rome*, in the time of *Edward the third*, and *Richard the second*, about the year 1370) was accused among other things, for maintaining, that all Oaths, which be made for any Contract or Civil Bargain betwixt man and man, are Unlawful.

LXXXV. We will bring in here a Passage out of the *Plowman's Tale*, as it lies in *Geffry Chaucer's Works*, not impertinent to our Purpose ; whose Learning, Honour and Wit was great in the time he lived, which was about 1360. *John Wickliff's* Contemporary.

- ' These Wollen make men to Swear,
- ' *against Christ's Commaundment* ;
- ' And Christ's Members all to tear,
- on rood as he were new yrent :
- ' Such Laws they maken by common Assent,
- ' each one it throweth as a Ball ; [sent,
- ' Thus the Poor be full shent ;
- ' but ever Falshood foul it befall.

Geff. Chaucer
Works, fol.
86.

He hath Expressions not less disliking Oaths in his *Parson's Tales*, where he makes the Parson to say, ' After those then com-
' eth Swearing, *expresly against the Com-*
' *mandment of God, and our Lord Jesus Christ,*
' *who saith by St. Matthew's words, Ne shall*
' *ye not Swear in all manner, or on no Ac-*
' *count.*

J. Fox Mart.
v. I. p. 614,
618.

LXXXVI. WILLIAM SWINDER-
BY, Priest, and a Zealous Follower of *John*
Wickliff, also lived in the time of *Richard*
the second, as appears by his Appeal to that
King, from the Unjust Sentence of the Bi-
shop of *Hereford*, in which to this part of
the Charge exhibited, (*That no man ought*
to swear for any thing, but simply, without
an Oath, to Affirm or Deny) he answers
thus, ' Whereas *Christ's Law forbids Swear-*
' *ing, the Pope's Law justifieth Swearing,*
' *and compels men thereunto : Methinks*
' *(saith he) there is no need to Comfort or*
' *Encourage the People in Swearing.*

J. Fox Mart.
v. I. p. 623.
359.

LXXXVII. WALTER BRUTE,
also an early Dissenter from the *Roman*
Church, and Intimate of *William Swinder-*
by; being charged, among other things,
with saying, *That it is not Lawful for Chri-*
stians, for any Cause to swear by the Creator,
neither by the Creature ; thus answer'd for
himself, and indeed, it comprehends much
of our Belief in this Matter : ' As concern-
' ing

'ing *Oaths*, I believe and obey the Doct-
 'rine of Almighty God, and my Master,
 'Jesus Christ, which teacheth, That *Chri-*
 'stian-men in Affirmation of a Truth should
 'pass the Righteousness of the *Scribes* and
 'Pharisees, the Old Testament, or else he
 'excludes them from the Kingdom of God:
 'For Christ says, *Unless your Righteousness*
 'exceed the Righteousness of the *Scribes and*
 'Pharisees, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom
 'of Heaven. And as concerning *Oaths*,
 'Christ saith, *It hath been said by them of*
 'old time, thou shalt not Forswear thy self,
 'but shalt perform unto the Lord those things
 'that thou knowest: But I say unto you, thou
 'shalt not swear at all, neither by Heaven,
 'nor yet by the Earth, &c. but let your Com-
 'munication be Yea, Yea; and Nay, Nay; for,
 'whatsoever shall be more than this proceed-
 'eth of Evil: Therefore as the Perfection of
 'the ancient Men of the Old Testament
 'was, Not to Forswear themselves; so the
 'Perfection of Christian Men is, Not to swear
 'at all, because we are so commanded of
 'Christ, whose Commandments must in no
 'Case be broken. Thus much of *W. Brute*.

LXXXVIII. John Purrey, John Edward, *J. Fox Mart.*
 John Becket, John Clements, Richard Herbert v. i. p. 687.
 and Emmot Willie, with many more in the
 time of Henry the fourth, through Fears and
 Hopes deserted their Profession, and revol-
 ted (as John Fox tells us) from their Faith,
 which

* If they
could nor, it
was then held
none could; so
that then it
was denying
all Tenders.

Ibid. p. 701,
702.

which was the Religion then profest of those called *Wickliffians* or *Lollards* (the True, Poor, Persecuted *Christians* of that time.) And of the Fifteen Articles by them abjured, this was one; Item, *That neither the * Pope, nor the Prelate, neither any Ordinary can compel any Man to Swear by any Creature of God, or by the Bible-Book.*

LXXXIX. WILLIAM THORPE, whom *John Fox* calls, *The constant and Blessed Servant of God, and good Man and Servant of Christ, &c.* refused to swear upon a Bible, when the *Arch-Bishop* tendered the Oath to him; for he thought it *Not Lawful* to take or give an Oath thereon, ‘ *Because a Book is nothing else (says he) but divers Creatures, of which it is made; and such Swearing is ever Unlawful, as witnesseth Chrysostom plainly, blaming them greatly, that bring out a Book to swear upon; charging Clerks, that in no wise they constrain any Body to swear well, when that thing is sooth (or true) that they swear for.* And also, full many Men and Women now say, *That it is well done to swear by God, and by our Lady, and by other Saints, to have them in mind; others say, That they may not swear, when they may otherwise be believed: But since all these Sayings are Excuses, and Sin, methinks, Sir (saith he) that this Sense of Chrysostom may be alledged well against all such Swearers.*

XC. ELIZ.

XC. ELIZABETH YOUNG, who was *J. Fox Mart.*
brought to Examination in the *Marian-days* v. 3. p. 910,
before the *Catholick Inquisitors of Heretical* 911.
Pravity, as they then called themselves, and
commanded to Swear, this Language was
used to her.

Dr. Martyn, 'Thou shalt be racked
' *Inch-meal*, thou *Trayterly Whore* and He-
' retick; but thou shalt swear before a Judge
' before thou go.

Eliz. Young, 'Sir, *I understand not what*
' *an Oath is, and therefore I will take no such*
' *thing upon me.*

Dr. Martyn, 'She refuseth to swear up-
' on the Four Evangelists before a Judge;
' for, I my self and *Mr. Hussey*, have had
' her before us Four times, but we cannot
' bring her to swear.

Then said the *Bishop*, 'Why wilt thou
' not swear before a Judge, &c.

Eliz. Young, 'My Lord, *I will not swear*
' *that this Hand is mine.*

'No, said the *Bishop*; and why?

Eliz. Young, '*Christ saith, That what-*
' *soever is more than Yea, Yea; or Nay, Nay,*
' *it cometh of Evil.*

Then *Dr. Cook* brought her to a Book,
commanding her to lay her Hand thereon.

Eliz. Young, 'No, my Lord, *I will not*
' *swear.* And so she persisted, till God deli-
vered her out of their Hands.

John Huss, Jerom of Prague, Walter Brute, William Swinderby, William Sawtry, William White, William Thorpe, &c. are recorded by those of other Nations, both High and Low Dutch, *to have refused all Swearing, as well by God, as by Creatures, in any Case, private or publick.* Though such as admit of Oaths in some Cases, labour, as *John Fox* in *England*, and the *Calvinists* abroad, to eclipse and mutilate their Testimony; as if they were one while only against *Book-Swearing*, as being a Creature; another while, only against Swearing in Private Cases; another while, as *J. Fox* relates in *John Burrell*, That it is not lawful to swear, *but in case of Life and Death, &c.* But most evident it is, that they were against *all Swearing, or Swearing at all*; else, why should they so frequently alledge *Chrysostom*, who, though he accounted Swearing by Creatures a more execrable Sin, than to Swear by God; yet constantly counted *Swearing at all, a Sin in Christians*, as cleaving to that which Christ had abrogated, being only permitted to the *Jews*, for the Hardness and Blindness of their Hearts, their Unbelief and Propensity to follow the Course of the *Heathens*, and swear by their Gods. Let it not be forgotten, that *Chrysostom* not only inveighs against them that bring forth the Book to swear by, because it is a Creature; but that he also upbraided them with Impudence

dence and Audaciouſneſs, that dare make uſe of that Law to adminiſter an Oath by, *that ſo ſtrictly forbids an Oath.*

Ridiculous it is, to make them deny Swearing only in private Caſes, and to be ready to ſwear in Caſe of Life and Death : For where is there any Shadow of ſuch a Law ? And how ſhall thoſe Honelt Men invent one ? Chriſt's Law we read *Mat. 5.* The Doctors, *Chryſoſtom* and *Jerom's* Judgment, whom they had moſtly in their Mouths, we have repeated here at large, in which is not the leaſt Reſtriction. Theſe Good Men then muſt needs be underſtood to take the Law of Chriſt either to have forbidden Swearing in any Caſe, and then not to ſwear in Caſe of Life ; or not to forbid Swearing at all, & then they not only might ſwear to ſave their Lives, but Liberties and Eſtates, and ought ſo to do. But we hope there can be no room left for this Objection.

XCI. The *LOLLARDS* of *Kille* in *Scot-* *Spotf. Hiſt. p.*
land were againſt all Swearing, as both *Spotf-* *61.*
wood in his *Chronicle* doth relate, and the
Book called, *The Hiſtory of the Reformation*
of the Kirk of Scotland.

XCII. *MICHAEL SADLER*, (an Emi- *W. C. Albrid,*
nent Man, call'd a *Lord*) was cruelly Tor- *p. 193, 194,*
tur'd and put to death by ſome *Papiſts* un- *195.*
der the Emperor of *Germany*, whoſe Bre-
thren were alſo Executed with the Sword,
and

and his Wife and Sisters drowned, *Anno* 1527. One Article alledged against him was, that he had said, *That Men should not Swear to, or before the Magistrate.*

Morl. Hist. p. 217, 218. **XCIII.** The *CHRISTIAN PROTESTANTS* in the Valley of *Piedmont*, who were cruelly Tortured to Death by the *Papists*, about *Ann. 1655*. One Article alledged against them was, *That they believed it was not lawful to Swear any thing, be it True or False.*

J. Fox Mart. v. 2. p. 420. **XCIV.** *GERARD SAGARELD* of *Parma* and his Followers, *Denied all Oaths and Vows*. So did several in *Germany*, mentioned by *Bp. Usher*, in his Book *De Successione*: 'In *Germany*, Swearing is well excluded, and need not much to be required.

Comm: on Mat. 5. **XCV.** *ERASMUS*, 'Now ye shall hear another thing. Commandment was given unto your Elders, none otherwise; but if they had made an Oath, they should perform it, and not be Forsworn; for now they are bound to God, and not to Man only: Wherefore among the *Jews* only Perjury is punishable; but he that deceives his Neighbour without any Oath made, he goes unpunished; but yet the Law of the Gospel condemneth him; the which, that ye may be the more remote from Perjury,

' jury, doth utterly condemn all manner of
 ' Oaths ; *that it is not lawful to Swear, nei-*
 ' *ther by God, nor by those things which seem*
 ' *to the Common Sort to be things of less Re-*
 ' *ligion, that is, Neither by Heaven, because*
 ' *it is the Seat of God ; nor by the Earth, be-*
 ' *cause it is his Foot-stool ; nor by Jerusalem,*
 ' *because it is the City of the Great King, that*
 ' is to say, of Him that hath made all
 ' things : Neither as the *Heathen* swear, by
 ' the *Head* of another Man, whereof thou
 ' hast no Authority ; but it is consecrate to
 ' God, that hath made all things as He
 ' would ; for thou canst not make one White
 ' Hair Black, nor the contrary : And be-
 ' cause all things are consecrate to God, the
 ' Maker, thou oughtest to be fearful to
 ' swear by any thing. And what needeth
 ' any Oath among them, *where no man, be-*
 ' *cause of their Simplicity, can distrust ; nor*
 ' *no man can desire to deceive, though they*
 ' *might do it ?* Such is their Sincerity and
 ' Perfectness, especially in those things of
 ' the which they declare themselves to be
 ' Despisers. Therefore among you, *plain*
 ' *and simple Speech ought to be more holy and*
 ' *more sure, than the devout and solemn Oath*
 ' *among the Jews :* For, among you, whose
 ' Hearts and Mouths ought to agree, there
 ' is no other use of Speech, but to express
 ' your Minds each to other. In your Bar-
 ' gains ye need no Oath, ye need no Exe-
 ' cration, or Cursing, or such like, to bind
 ' the

' the Promiser, or to assure him to whom
 ' the Promise is made : Two Words be
 ' sufficient, *Nay* and *Yea*, whereby thou de-
 ' nyest that which thou dost not promise,
 ' and whereby thou dost perform that which
 ' thou didst promise by plain Word, that
 ' thou wouldst do : For, there is no man
 ' less bound by his simple and bare Word,
 ' than the Jew, Swearing by all holy Things;
 ' and he whom thou makest thy Promise
 ' unto, doth trust thee as much as if thou
 ' hadst made a solemn Oath. *If there be*
 ' any * more beside these, it must needs come
 ' of Evil and Sin: For, he that sweareth,
 ' either he thinketh Evil of him to whom he
 ' sweareth ; or else he that requireth the
 ' Oath, doth distrust : But none of these ought
 ' to be in you, whom I would have perfect in all
 ' Points. Therefore, when I utterly forbid
 ' Swearing, I do not abolish the Law, which
 ' doth prohibit Perjury ; but I make the Law
 ' more full, and I with-draw men farther
 ' from that, which the Law doth punish.

Erasmus here
 plainly forbid-
 deth all Swear-
 ing on any
 account.

Comm. on
 Jam 5.

' Let your Mind be pure and plain, and
 ' let your Heart and your Mouth go both
 ' together : Let no man with feign'd words
 ' deceive his Neighbour. But especially, my
 ' Brethren, Swear Not, lest by little and
 ' little you accustom your selves to For-
 ' swear. Among Jews and Heathens, for
 ' Fidelity's sake, there is an Oath put ; But
 ' among Christians, which ought neither to
 ' distrust any man, nor to deceive, it is a
 ' vain

Vain Thing to Swear. Whosoever is accus-
 'stomed to Swear, is Cousen-german to
 'the Peril of Forswearing. Be you afraid,
 'not only to Swear by *God* in humane Af-
 'fairs, and in light Matters, *but also ab-*
 'stain from all kind of Swearing, that you
 'Swear neither by Heaven, neither by Earth,
 'or any other thing, that the Common People
 'esteem for * *Holy and Religious.* Whoso-
 'ever dare be bold to Lye without Swear-
 'ing, he dare do the same also when he
 'Swareth, if he list. To be brief: *He*
 'that is a good man, will believe a man with-
 'out Swearing, and he that is naught, will
 'not trust a man though he Swear: But a-
 'mong you that are furnished with Evan-
 'gelical Plainness, there is neither place to
 'distrust, nor to imagine Deceit: But let
 'your plain Communication be regarded for no
 'less True and Stedfast, than any manner of
 'Oath of the Jews or Pagans, how holy soever
 'it be. As often as you confirm any thing,
 'confirm it with all your Heart; and perform
 'indeed the thing that you speak: As oft as
 'you deny any thing, deny it with your whole
 'Heart; neither let any thing else be in your
 'Heart than your Mouth speaketh, that there
 'be no Counterfeiting in you, seeing you are
 'Disciples of the Truth.

Then not by
 God; for the
 common-peo-
 ple esteemed
 Him Sacred.

Thus far, we hope, is put altogether out
 of Question, *Whether many Learned and*
Christian Men have not flatly denied the Use

of Oaths to True Christians. And though we need not the Contribution that is afforded us by several School and other Roman Doctors, yet to evidence a kind of Succession, and Universality of Testimony to this Doctrine, we think it not improper to mention some of them.

The Judgment of Schoolmen and others, in this Point.

Gloss on
Mat. 5. p. 22. **XCVI. T. AQUINAS**, *Non jurare omni-
no, &c.* Not to swear at all, &c. ' The Lord
' had taught before, *Wrong is not to be done*
' *to our Neighbour*, as in forbidding Anger
' with Murder, Lust, Adultery, putting a-
' way of one's Wife; and now he teacheth
' consequently, that we must abstain from
' the wronging of God, when he doth not
' forbid only *Forswearing*, as Evil, but also
' an *Oath*, as the Occasion of Evil, from
' whence he saith, hear thou again, *For it*
' *was said of old time, Thou shalt not For-*
' *swear thy self* : and lest that they might
' make to themselves the Creatures Gods,
' he commandeth, *to render the Oaths to God,*
' *and not to swear by the Creatures* ; from
' whence it follows, *Render to God, &c.*
' that is, If one shall happen to swear by
' the Creator, not by the Creature, whence
' he saith in *Deuteronomy, Thou shalt fear*
' *the Lord thy God, and by his Name shalt*
' *swear* ; and this was allowed by the Law,
' as

' as to Children, that as they did not offer
 ' Sacrifice to Idols, they should not offer then
 ' to Idols ; so they were permitted to swear
 ' by God, not that they might do this
 ' rightly, but that it might be better to
 ' give this to God, than to Devils. *Chry-*
 ' *ostom* upon *Matthew*, *For no man sweareth*
 ' *frequently, that sometimes may not forswear ;*
 ' *as he that makes it a Custom to speak many*
 ' *things, sometimes he speaks unfit things.*
 ' *Augustine* against *Faustus*, the Lord was
 ' more willing that we not Swearing might
 ' come short of the Truth, than Swearing the
 ' Truth, to come nearer to Perjury : Whence
 ' it follows, *I say unto you, Swear not at all.*
 ' *Augustine* on the Words of the Lord in
 ' the mountain, in which he confirms the
 ' Righteousness of the *Pharisees*, which is,
 ' Not to Forswear, *For he cannot Forswear,*
 ' *that doth not Swear.*

XCVII. *CASSETAN* [*Again, Ye have* On *Mat. 5;*
heard] ' He perfects another Precept of the fol. 18.
 ' Old Law concerning *Perjury* (because it
 ' was said to them of old time, *Thou shalt*
 ' *not Forswear*) *Exod. 20. Thou shalt not*
 ' *take the Name of thy God in vain : And*
 ' *Levit. 19. Thou shalt not Forswear in the*
 ' *Name of the Lord ; but shalt render to the*
 ' *Lord thy Oaths.* The first part of this Pre-
 ' cept (namely, *Thou shalt not Forswear*) is
 ' negative, forbidding Evil in it's kind ; for
 ' *Perjury* is Evil of it self, therefore by no

Reason it can be excused. But the second
 part (namely, *Thou shalt render to the Lord
 thy Oaths*) is affirmative, and doth not
 signifie to fulfil the Oaths which thou hast
 promised (as it appears) and thereupon no-
 thing follows of fulfilling of Promises) but
 it signifies, that the Oaths to God are to
 be rendred; that is, that Swearing must
 be by the Lord, not by the Creatures:
 For these words are not in the Law, but
 the Sense of them is, Deut. 6. *Thou shalt
 swear by the Name of the Lord thy God:*
 Where Swearing is not commanded, but
 is but regulated, that it should be by the
 Name of God, and not by the Name of
 the Creatures: For, the Law commandeth,
 that this Act of Religion, which is, to
 swear, should be exhibited to God, and
 to no Creatures or Idols whatsoever. [*But
 I say unto you*] He perfecteth both the
 Precepts, adjoyning two Precepts; the
 one Negative, the other Affirmative (*Not
 to Swear at all.*) Lo! a Negative Precept,
 wherein two things are contained, that is,
Not to Swear, and *Not at all*; he forbids
 us to *Swear at all*, by all means; as well
 in expressing God, as not in expressing
 God; suppose by Heaven and Earth, and
 by the rest of the Creatures: And in this
 he perfects the Precept concerning not For-
 swearing, not only by taking away an
 Oath, but the Occasion of Forswearing;
 for, 'tis impossible to incur Forswearing
 without

‘ without an Oath : and also, the Precept
 ‘ of performing the Oath to God, by taking
 ‘ away the Care of Performing ; for where
 ‘ nothing is sworn, there is no need of any
 ‘ Care of Performing the Oath to God.

XCVIII. ALPHONSUS de Avendano, Comm. on

Mat. 5.

‘ It's to be noted out of *Cajetan*, that in this
 ‘ the Lord perfected the Command of not
 ‘ Forswearing, by taking away not only
 ‘ Forswearing, but the Occasion of not
 ‘ Forswearing ; because, without an Oath
 ‘ it is impossible to incur Perjury. An Oath
 ‘ was not necessary by the first Intention of
 ‘ Nature ; for if men had continued in the
 ‘ Truth, they had not lyed ; and because
 ‘ Christ came, that he might bring back
 ‘ men to this first Innocency, an Oath was
 ‘ not necessary, supposing that men ought
 ‘ to return unto it ; then to men that live
 ‘ according to the Simplicity of the Gospel,
 ‘ an Oath is not Necessary, and therefore
 ‘ not Good.

**REASONS for avoiding Oaths, from
 the same Author.**

‘ **F**irst, Left by Swearing they fall into
 ‘ Perjury, for which Cause Swearing
 ‘ is of an ill Report amongst the Saints, as
 ‘ in *Ambrose, Psalm 18.*

‘ Secondly, For Reverence of the Name of
 ‘ God.

K 3

‘ Thirdly,

• *Thirdly*, For the mutual Confidence
 • which one *Christian* should have of ano-
 • ther, which ought to be so great, that e-
 • very one should be sure, and not possible
 • to be deceived in the least thing, although
 • he should speak in a single Assertion; and
 • for the Authority of the Saints, which do
 • seem to forbid all Oaths to *Christians*,
 • and that the Truth of the Gospel receives
 • no Oath, as good and desirable of it self;
 • seeing every one is of Evil.

• *Lastly*, (Out of *Cajetan*.) the Lord per-
 • fecteth this Precept of not Forswearing,
 • by taking away not only Perjury, but the
 • Occasion of it, and taking away the
 • Care. For, where there is no Swearing,
 • there is no need of Care of Rendering.

• Oh! how Sincere and True would the
 • Lord make his *Christians*, that all Affir-
 • mations should be included in Three Let-
 • ters only, all Denyals in other Three,
 • that the Truth should be so familiar to
 • us, as to be included in the Compendium
 • of Three Letters?

On 1 *King* 12.
 n. 3. II.

XCIX. FRANCISCUS de MENDOCA,
Olysiponensis, Dr. Theol. in *Eburenf.* Aca-
 demia, Sac. lit. Interpres, in 4. *lib. Reg.*
 Tom. 3. • *Speak saith he, of me, &c.* In the
 • *Hebrew* it is עָנָה i. e. *testifie*, from the verb
 • עָנָה, which not only signifieth to *speak*,
 • but also to *bear Testimony*, as it is to be
 • seen *Ex.* 20. n. 14. *Deut.* 19. n. 15.
 • *Job*

' Job. 16. n. 9. *& passim alibi*, and many
 ' other places ; as if there were no Diffe-
 ' rence with the *Hebrews* of *speaking* and *te-*
 ' *stifying*, nor without Cause ; for there
 ' ought to be so much Veracity of Good
 ' Men, that their Simple Speech may be ac-
 ' counted sworn, and their private Confe-
 ' rence be accounted a publick Testimony,
 ' which was to be accounted the Fidelity
 ' of *Cato*, who was believed in a Court-
 ' Case even *Unsworn* ; which also *St. Jerome*
 ' in his Epistle to *Celantia*, inculcates ;
 ' *Let there be, saith he, so much Love of*
 ' *Truth in thee, that whatsoever thou sayest,*
 ' *thou mayst think to be sworn.* The same
 ' *Jerome* to that of *Mat. 5. Swear not, &c.*
 ' *The Gospel-Truth, saith he, doth not receive*
 ' *an Oath, sith every Faithful Speech is for an*
 ' *Oath.* To which Opinion is agreeable
 ' the Doctrine of *Philo Alex.* in his Book of
 ' the *Decalogue*, *It will be most profitable,*
 ' *saith he, and most agreeable to the rational*
 ' *Nature, to abstain Altogether from Swearing ;*
 ' *and be so accustomed to Truth, that one's*
 ' *single Word may have the Force of an Oath.*
 ' The like relateth *Josephus*, in the second
 ' Book of the *Jewish War*, cap. 7. *De Hist.*
 ' *Esseni*, most sincere Worshippers of Truth
 ' (*vericultoribus.*) The *Hebrew Elders* also
 ' when they would make their Innocency
 ' about the man kill'd by an Uncertain Au-
 ' thor, testified with an Oath, as the *Rab-*
 ' *bins*, *Solomon* and *Moses* in *Lyrans.* affirm,

' *Deut. 21.* Nevertheless, they are brought
 ' in by the Scripture, asseverating it only
 ' with simple Speech ; *And they shall say,*
 ' *saith he, Our Hands have not shed this*
 ' *Blood, nor our Eyes seen it.* Because the
 ' simple and naked Speech of a Wise Man,
 ' is equivalent to an Oath ; which St. Ber-
 ' nard vehemently commendeth in *Comite*
 ' *Theobaldo*, in *Epist. 38.* to the same. *And*
 ' *indeed, saith he, in other Princes, if at a-*
 ' *ny time we take a Word of Lightness or*
 ' *Falseness, we account it neither new nor*
 ' *wonderful :* But with *Count Theobald*, we
 ' do not at all patiently hear *Yea* and *Nay*,
 ' to whom as it is said, *Simply to speak, is*
 ' *to Swear* ; and a light *Lye* is accounted a
 ' heavy *Perjury* ; for among very many En-
 ' signs of Virtue, which do very much en-
 ' noble your Dignity, and make your Name
 ' Renowned and Famous throughout the
 ' World, the Constancy of Truth is espe-
 ' cially praised in you. 3. Certainly God
 ' himself hath (*tantundem*) to much to speak
 ' nakedly, and to swear by himself holily :
 ' For that he promised with an Oath an
 ' Off-spring to *David*, which should sit on
 ' his Throne, is read no where in the Scrip-
 ' ture ; And yet *Abner*, 2 *Sam. 3. v. 9.*
 ' acknowledges an Off-spring sworn to *Da-*
 ' *vid*, *The Lord do so to Abner*, saith he, *and*
 ' *add these things to him, unless as the Lord*
 ' *hath sworn to David, so I do with him.*
 ' And in *Psalme 88.* God himself saith, *Once*
 ' *have*

‘ have I sworn in my Holiness, if I lye to Da-
 ‘ vid, &c. Also the Land of *Canaan* is no
 ‘ where found in the Holy Scriptures pro-
 ‘ mised to the ancient Fathers with an Oath;
 ‘ but God promised it simply to *Abraham*,
 ‘ *Gen. 12. 13 and 17. to Isaac, Gen. 26.*
 ‘ *to Jacob, Gen. 28. Yet Moses, in Deut. 1.*
 ‘ *Possess, saith he, the Land, for which the*
 ‘ *Lord swore to your Fathers. Philo Alex.*
 ‘ *in the Book of Abraham, at the end looses*
 ‘ *the Knot notably; That therefore the simple*
 ‘ *Promise of God in those places is called an Oath,*
 ‘ *because it hath the Force of an Oath.*

C. JACOBUS FABER, ‘ It is the part On *Mat. 5.*
 ‘ of a Spiritual Man, not only Not to P 23, 24.
 ‘ Swear in a Vain Thing, but also not in
 ‘ any Serious Thing; for, you which are
 ‘ such, are true: Unto true men it’s suffici-
 ‘ ent that a true Man gain Belief, if he say,
 ‘ that the Lord hath commanded *Yea, Yea,*
 ‘ in Affirming; *Nay, Nay,* in Denying: But
 ‘ if with Incredulous and Evil men a Speech
 ‘ also be had concerning a serious and ne-
 ‘ cessary Matter, why shall one Swear for
 ‘ their Badness, that he may gain Belief
 ‘ with them? Who ever spake more seri-
 ‘ ously than our Saviour? Who more ne-
 ‘ cessary things? Yet he never used other
 ‘ Speech than that, *Verely, verely, I say un-*
 ‘ *to you,* or some other such like, which was
 ‘ a true Form or Manner to them, that
 ‘ swore not. Therefore that now some
 ‘ Swear,

' Swear, to gain Belief concerning some
 ' profitable and necessary things, which
 ' they think is to be given rather to the
 ' Oath than to the Person : Perhaps also
 ' there is a Danger when an Oath is requir-
 ' ed in Judgment, lest he that exacteth it,
 ' sin ; For if it be manifest, that he that is
 ' called into Judgment be verely good and
 ' true, it is enough to hear of him *Yea* or
 ' *Nay* ; but if that be not evident, or that
 ' it be evident, that he is bad, perhaps
 ' that's required of him which ought not
 ' to be required. What then ? It is law-
 ' ful to Adjure : For the Lord made Answer
 ' to an Adjuration, but he did not swear ;
 ' and Adjurations are found in the New
 ' Law : But if any one being Adjured of
 ' another, speak the Truth, by answering
 ' *Yea* or *Nay*, or by declaring the thing re-
 ' quired, neither the one nor the other of-
 ' fendeth ; but if he speak a Falsity, he of-
 ' fends, and incurs the Offence of a False
 ' Testimony, but perchance he sinneth less,
 ' than if by Swearing he had also fallen in-
 ' to the Guilt of Perjury : For, as he that
 ' (being adjured) answereth in Truth, doth
 ' not Swear ; so he that answereth in Falsi-
 ' ness, doth not Forswear, but he is a False
 ' Witness : but he also who hath adjured,
 ' is altogether guiltless ; for there is no
 ' doubt, but he hath required that which
 ' was lawful to require. And although its
 ' not my Purpose to contradict the Ordi-
 ' nances

nances of Judgments, yet I may think this
 to be more *Christian*, both *Not to Swear at*
all, neither to *Compel to Swear*, to be
 more Spiritual : But yet if the Badness
 of men would permit it, although you
 would have this Sentence of the Lord con-
 cerning *not Swearing*, to be applyed to the
 Believers common and daily Custom of
 speaking (for he speaks to his Disciples)
 which is very true, especially if the Old
 Law, which the Lord declares, *Thou shalt*
not Forswear, but shalt render to the Lord
thine Oaths, was given concerning common
 and daily Speech ; but afterwards the
 Lord amendeth another thing, which was
 written in the Old Law that the Law
 might be perfect, and that he might shew
 how he hath fulfilled it ; and it may be
 fulfilled of others, as *Matthew* shews.

CI. *SUAREZ* : He affirmeth, ' Christ
 did not Swear, because that which he
 could not lawfully do, he could not sim-
 ply do ; but he could not lawfully swear,
 therefore he could not at all : But that
 he never swore, is proved, because that he
 himself commanded or counselled, *Not to*
Swear at all ; but simply to speak, *Yea, it*
is ; *Nay, it is not*, &c. therefore ought to
 go before the Example. It is spoken of
 him only sometimes that he said *Amen*, or
Truly, or *Verely*, which we have before
 shewed to be no Particle of Swearing.

Dequest jur.
 Christ p. 306.

It's

' Swear, to gain Belief concerning some
 ' profitable and necessary things, which
 ' they think is to be given rather to the
 ' Oath than to the Person : Perhaps also
 ' there is a Danger when an Oath is requir-
 ' ed in Judgment, lest he that exacteth it,
 ' sin ; For if it be manifest, that he that is
 ' called into Judgment be verely good and
 ' true, it is enough to hear of him *Yea* or
 ' *Nay* ; but if that be not evident, or that
 ' it be evident, that he is bad, perhaps
 ' that's required of him which ought not
 ' to be required. What then ? It is law-
 ' ful to Adjure : For the Lord made Answer
 ' to an Adjuration, but he did not swear ;
 ' and Adjurations are found in the New
 ' Law : But if any one being Adjured of
 ' another, speak the Truth, by answering
 ' *Yea* or *Nay*, or by declaring the thing re-
 ' quired, neither the one nor the other of-
 ' fendeth ; but if he speak a Falsity, he of-
 ' fends, and incurs the Offence of a False
 ' Testimony, but perchance he sinneth less,
 ' than if by Swearing he had also fallen in-
 ' to the Guilt of Perjury : For, as he that
 ' (being adjured) answereth in Truth, doth
 ' not Swear ; so he that answereth in Falsi-
 ' ness, doth not Forswear, but he is a False
 ' Witness : but he also who hath adjured,
 ' is altogether guiltless ; for there is no
 ' doubt, but he hath required that which
 ' was lawful to require. And although its
 ' not my Purpose to contradict the Ordi-
 ' nances

• nances of Judgments, yet I may think this
 • to be more *Christian*, both *Not to Swear at*
 • *all*, neither to *Compel to Swear*, to be
 • more Spiritual : But yet if the Badness
 • of men would permit it, although you
 • would have this Sentence of the Lord con-
 • cerning *not Swearing*, to be applyed to the
 • Believers common and daily Custom of
 • speaking (for he speaks to his Disciples)
 • which is very true, especially if the Old
 • Law, which the Lord declares, *Thou shalt*
 • *not Forswear, but shalt render to the Lord*
 • *thine Oaths*, was given concerning common
 • and daily Speech ; but afterwards the
 • Lord amendeth another thing, which was
 • written in the Old Law that the Law
 • might be perfect, and that he might shew
 • how he hath fulfilled it ; and it may be
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Cl. *SUAREZ*: He affirmeth, ' Christ
 • did not Swear, because that which he
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 • therefore he could not at all : But that
 • he never swore, is proved, because that he
 • himself commanded or counselled, *Not to*
 • *Swear at all* ; but simply to speak, Yea, *it*
 • *is* ; Nay, *it is not*, &c. therefore ought to
 • go before the Example. It is spoken of
 • him only sometimes that he said *Amen*, or
 • *Truly*, or *Verely*, which we have before
 • shewed to be no Particle of Swearing.

De quest jur.
 Christ p. 306.

• It's

‘ It’s not only forbidden in the New, but
 ‘ also in the Old Testament, *Not to Swear*,
 ‘ as *Hos. 4. Zach. 5.* quoteth *Tertullian*, lib.
 ‘ *de Idololat. cap. 11.* saying, *I am silent a-*
 ‘ *bout Perjury, seeing that indeed it is not*
 ‘ *lawful to Swear.*

pag. 227. ‘ And those very words of Christ, *Swear*
 ‘ *not at all*, signifie this (seeing he subjoyns
 ‘ *Neither by Heaven, &c.*) as if he had said,
 ‘ not only greater Oaths, but also these
 ‘ which seem less, you are to take heed of,
 ‘ and it is apparent from the Reason, which
 ‘ he adjoyns, saying, *Neither by Heaven:*
 ‘ It therefore Christ forbiddeth to swear by
 ‘ Heaven, because God dwells therein, much
 ‘ more he forbiddeth to swear by God, &c.
 ‘ Now he forbiddeth all manner of Swear-
 ‘ ing by the Creatures, and every Oath by
 ‘ God himself, as *Greg. Nyssen.* rightly ar-
 ‘ gues, and Christ himself hath plainly so
 ‘ declared, *Mat. 23.*

Hom. 18. in
 Cant.

‘ *Lastly*, The following Words of Christ
 ‘ are opposit, *Let your Word be Yea and Nay;*
 ‘ for by them he declareth, that he before
 ‘ forbade the Addition of any Oath. 2dly.
 ‘ *Jerome* answers, *Swearing was permitted to*
 ‘ *the Jews, as to Children; but Evangelical*
 ‘ *Verity receives not Swearing, seeing every*
 ‘ *Faithful Word is for an Oath.* The same
 ‘ Doctrine and Exposition doth *Chrysostom*
 ‘ follow. *Theophylact*, after Christ, *It is an*
 ‘ *Evil to Swear, as to be Circumcised, and in*
 ‘ *brief, whatsoever is Jewish.* Beda, also
 ‘ *Castro*

‘ *Castro* and *Druthmarus* confess, and *Bernard* himself denies not, that it is the
 ‘ Counsel of Christ, *not to Swear*. And
 ‘ Precepts are not contrary to Counsels.

‘ *Libr. 1. cap. 14. p. 282. Whether an*
 ‘ *Oath be an elicit Act of Religious Virtue?*

‘ There may be a Reason of Doubting,
 ‘ because every Act of Religion is principal-
 ‘ ly intended for the Worship of God : But
 ‘ an *Oath* is not made primarily, and of it
 ‘ self (*per se*) for the Worship of God ; but
 ‘ for confirming, &c. as *Heb. 6*. From
 ‘ whence it seems plainly to follow, That pag. 276.
 ‘ an *Oath* is not an Act of Religion.

‘ It may be declared by Reason ; because,

‘ 1st. It is impossible that man can bring
 ‘ God for a Witness, although he would
 ‘ never so fain : Therefore the Name of God
 ‘ is taken in vain, as often as it is taken to
 ‘ swear ; Therefore it is Evil in it self (*per*
 ‘ *se*.)

‘ 2^{dly}. Grant this were possible, to bring
 ‘ God for a Witness ; it seems disorderly to
 ‘ bring the Person of God to confirm men’s
 ‘ Businesses, Covenants, or Words, because,
 ‘ it is disorderly to order things of an Higher
 ‘ Order to those that are Inferiour : Much
 ‘ more is it disorderly, to mix the sacred
 ‘ Authority of God to the prophane (or
 ‘ common) Words and Businesses of Men.

‘ 3^{dly}. Though in some Case an Oath
 ‘ might be used without Inconvenience, yet
 ‘ it is so exposed to Dangers, that it can
 ‘ scarce

‘ scarce be done without Crime : But in the
 ‘ Law of Grace ; because of the Perfection
 ‘ of it, not only Sins are to be forbid, but
 ‘ also those things which do morally and
 ‘ nearest entangle into Sin : For he that lo-
 ‘ veth Danger, shall perish in it. He quotes

Const. 6. *Clemens Romanus*, lib. 6. *Constitut. Apost.*
 & 11.

as before, *Our Master commanded, that we
 should not Swear, no, not by the true God ;
 that our Word should be counted more firm and
 credible than an Oath it self.* He quotes
 also *Greg. Nazianzen* as before, upon these
 words, [*But I say unto you, &c.*] *He forbid-*
deth all manner of Swearing by the Creatures,
even with Respect to God : Hence it follows
 from the forcibler, as I said, that he forbid
 all Swearing by God himself, as *Gregory*
Nazianzen rightly argues, as before, on *Cant.*
Homil. 18 And Christ himself plainly so
 declared, *Mat. 23.* *He that Swareth by*
Heaven, Swareth by the Throne of God, &c.

‘ *Lastly,* The words withstand which Christ
 ‘ subjoyns, [*Let your Word be, &c.*] For, by
 ‘ them he declares, that he had before for-
 ‘ bidden the adding of an Oath : There-
 ‘ fore *Jerome* answered, *That Oaths, &c.*
 ‘ *were permitted to the Jews, as to Children.*

He uses many other Arguments, and
 quotes many Authors, as may be seen at
 large in his Book concerning *Swearing*.

CII. JO. MAJOR HADINGTONIANI,

on

on *Mat. 5. Not to Swear at all*: 'That
' Precept was given to the Disciples (the
' Basis) of the first Church.

CIII. *JOAC. CAMER.* and *P. LOSE-
LER VILLERIUS*'s Marginal Note upon
Mat. 5. 37. 'Whatsoever you vouch, vouch
' it *barely*; and whatsoever you deny, deny
' it *barely*, without any more words.

CIV. Bible, imprinted *Ann. 1559.* in
Quarto. [*What is more, is of Evil*] Margi-
nal Note, 'From an evil Conscience, or from
' the Devil.

CV. *MARLORAT* on *Mat. 5.* faith,
' Some men, *not bad*, hold against Swearing.

Maldonat on *Mat. 5.* reckons up several
against Swearing.

CVI. *PETER CHARRON*, Doctor of
Law in *Paris*, in his Book of Wisdom,
chap. 37. 'An Oath, what is it, but a
' Symptom and shameful Mark of Distrust,
' Infidelity, Ignorance, Humane Infirmary,
' both in him that Requires it, that Gives it,
' that Ordains it (alluding to Christ's Words,
' faith he) *Quod amplius est a malo*; What
' is more, is from the Devil.

CVII. *BEZA*, on *James 5. 12.* 'That
' which you have to say or affirm, speak or
; affirm

‘ affirm it *simply*, and *without an Oath*; and
 ‘ that you have to deny, deny it *simply* and
 ‘ *flatly*.

CVIII. *Folio Bible*, printed *Ann.* 1578.
 Marginal Note on *Mat.* 5. 34. *Swear not at*
all, ‘ Let Simplicity and Truth be your
 ‘ Words, and then you shall not be so light,
 ‘ and ready to Swear.

Comm. on
 I *Tim.* 1. pag.
 210.

CIX. *LODOVICUS SOTO* Major;
 ‘ In the Gospel, this Particle (*Amen*) is of-
 ‘ ten used by Christ our Lord, *confirming*
 ‘ his Words by it, as *Hierom* also noteth;
 ‘ yet it’s not to be thought (that none be
 ‘ deceived) that Christ our Lord *swore*, or
 ‘ would have to *swear*, as often as he useth
 ‘ this Word or Form of Confirming; but
 ‘ rather so to have been willing more to
 ‘ *Confirm*, and *Perswade*, and *Commend* those
 ‘ Things which he taught, and especially
 ‘ by *Reiterating* or *Repeating* this Word, as
 ‘ he often useth; for neither in this doubl-
 ‘ ing of the Word, for nought that Christ
 ‘ our Lord sometimes useth it in the Gospel,
 ‘ but rather it hath a great *Emphasis* and
 ‘ Encrease, that is, great Moment and
 ‘ Weight to *perswade* and gain *Belief*, as
 ‘ *Augustine* rightly teacheth and explaineth
 ‘ in his Forty first *Tract* upon the Gospel of
 ‘ *John*, expounding those Words of Christ,
 ‘ saying, *Amen*, or *verely*, *verely I say unto*
 ‘ *you*, *He that doth Sin, is the Servant of*
 ‘ *Sin*:

* *Sin*: although therefore that it be not a
 * *Swearing*, yet it is a certain greater *Con-*
 * *firmation* and *Asseveration* of those Things
 * which are spoken; yet nevertheless it is
 * not *Swearing*; for otherwise is it likely
 * that Christ the Lord, who himself *deports*
 * others from *Swearing at all*, for Danger
 * of *Forswearing*, should himself *Swear* so
 * often? for he not only *forbad* his to *Swear*,
 * *Mat. 5.* but also at the same Time, and
 * that very wholsomly, that they should ori-
 * ly use in their Speech a simple Affirmation
 * and Denial, without any *Oath*, saying,
 * *Swear NOT at all.* &c. for this much
 * more becomes the *Simplicity, Sincerity, Pi-*
 * *ety* and *Modesty* of *Christians*; for nothing
 * is more Simple, Brief and Effectual to
 * perswade (the Badness and Naughtiness of
 * Men being removed) than a *single Affir-*
 * *mation* or *Denial*, although there were no
 * Danger of *Perjury*.

In this Sense in a Manner, do mostly all
 the graver Authors interpret that Place of
 the Gospel, or Command of Christ, of *Not*
Swearing at all; but especially *Augustine*,
 lib. 4. of the Lord's Words in the Mount,
 Cap. 30. and 31. and in his Book *de Men-*
dacio, cap. 15. and *Epist. 154.* to *Publicola*,
 and often else-where; For which Interpre-
 tation or Understanding votes also *Philo*
Judaeus in his Book of the *Decalogue*, Tom.
 2. p. 129. where treating of an *Oath*, he

L

thus

thus congruently writeth; *Men sin in this Respect many and divers ways, therefore it will be most profitable and most agreeable to the Reasonable Nature, to abstain ALTOGETHER from Swearing, and so to accustom to Truth, that simple Speech may have the Force of an Oath, &c.* Which things *Philo* in the same place pursues to the same Sense, very congruently in the Gospel, that which also he confirms in his *Book of Special Laws*, Tom. 2. pag. 137. And afterwards, *If therefore, as I said before, Christ the Lord for the Danger of Perjury, and also for the Reverence or Religion of an Oath, commands his NOT to swear at all, though otherwise, it be true which they affirm; If I say, there be so much Reverence of an Oath, how great is the Perfection? It is not likely nor agreeable to Reason, that the Lord Christ, the Patern of true and solid Virtue, every Action of whom is our Instruction, did Swear so often, that is, should swear as often as he used this Form, Verily, verily, I say unto you, &c.* For how can every moral Action of his, or in his Conversation, be our Instruction or Example, if he so frequently and every where seems to do that, which he so vehemently and earnestly commanded his, even his chosen Disciples, that is, his Apostles, that they should not do it at all? Yet *Augustine* in his *Book of the Apostles Words*, Ser. 30. seems by his Authority to create some Scruple and Ado for us, inasmuch as he seems to censure

and

and say, *That it is a kind of Perjury, when any wittingly and willingly* (that is, with certain Reason and Will, or of set Purpose) *useth this Word VERILY, to confirm any Thing*: Yet if we diligently mark and weigh the Words of St. *Augustine* there, he intends no other than what we intend, acknowledge and confess, and is necessarily to be confessed, namely that he, which from a *false Opinion* and *Perswasion*, and an *Erroneous Conscience*, as *Divines* call it, thinketh and believeth that he *Swareth* in very Deed in using this Word, as if this Word were an Adverb of *Swearing*, that sometimes he happens in a Manner to *Forswear*, if that which he affirms in this Manner be *false*; yet this is accidental and adventitious, namely, by the Intention of him that sweareth of his own *Will*, or rather *Error* or *Ignorance*, and not by the Force and Propriety of the Word *Amen* or *Verily*, seeing, as we have said even now, that it is not a Word or Note of *Swearing*, but rather of Confirming, as we confess: And the same St. *Augustine* teacheth else-where, but especially in *Tract 41.* on the Gospel of *John*, on those Words of Christ the Lord *Verily, verily, &c.* where *Augustine* moderating his Words, saith thus, ‘*Verily, verily, is, if we may so say, in a certain Manner, a Swearing of Christ.*’ Now these Words of *Augustine* are to be weighed; he dealeth not simply, but with an Additament and Cau-

tion. *Verily, verily, to be* (if it be lawful to say it) after a Manner a *Swearing* of Christ; for so he declares plain enough, that *Verily, verily*, is not properly *Swearing*, or a Note of *Swearing*, but only improperly, and after a certain Manner, *viz.* So far forth as Christ the Lord doth familiarly use this Word as *Swearing*, although in very Deed, and properly it be not an Adverb of *Swearing*, but rather affirming and asserting simply and in good Faith, to gain a better Perswasion of the *Matter* or *Doctrine*; for Christ never seems to have *Sworn*, if we will speak truly and properly of *Swearing*, but always used a simple Speech though sometimes *per amplificationem*; he hath used this, even repeated, I say, for the greater *Perswasion* of his Heavenly *Doctrine*, that by this Means he might give his an Example of *Not Swearing rashly* and every where, as we have already said, to whom he plainly commanded, saying, *Swear not at all, &c. but, &c.* so great is the Religion of *Swearing*, and the Danger of *For swearing*.

*The Approbation and Commendation
of the Doctors of Paris.*

WE have carefully read these Commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul, and Timothy, and Titus, wherein the most Learned Author, according to the great Learning wherein he excells, largely and elegantly opens the

the more hidden Senses of the Apostle ; and we have thought them worthy to be Printed for publick Profit, A^d Par. 16 Feb. 1610.

F. Coeff.

F. J. Tourn, &c.

CX. LUDOVICUS PIUS Empe- Lindenbrog.
Cod. leg. anti-
quar.
ror, who in his *Prologue* saith, That from
his Youth, by Christ's Inspiration, he had the
Desire of the Worship of God. Capitul. Ad-
dit. 4. Tit. 96. Of not Swearing : ' That
' every one beware of Swearing ; because For-
' swearers as also Adulterers, shall not inherit
' the Kingdom of God.

CXI. King LUITPRANDUS ; The Ibid.
Law of the Lumbards, Tit. 28. Law 2.
' If he that enquires concerning Theft, believe
' not the Witnesses, the Witnesses may confirm
' it with an Oath, except they be such Persons,
' as the King or Judge may trust without an
' Oath.

CXII. The Emperor LOTHARIUS, Ibid.
Of the Law of the Lumbards, Tit. 3. Law
10. ' Of those that enforce Payment of Tythes,
' we will not have them to be constrain'd
' with an OATH, for fear of Forswearing.

CXIII. Of the Law of the VISOGOTHS Ibid.
L. 2. Tit. 1. Law 23. which was ancient :
L 3 ' Let

* *Let none come easily to an Oath: For the
 * true Search of Justice rather commendeth this,
 * that the Scriptures in all things may inter-
 * cur, and the Necessity of Swearing may al-
 * together suspend it self.*

Thus much against *Swearing* from several
Roman Doctors and others.

We shall in the next place produce the
 Judgment of those Men, who run not so
 high in their Censure of *Oaths*, as the Per-
 sons that we have hitherto cited, but that
 believe it is not unlawful in any Case to
 take an *Oath*, and from them we doubt not
 to make appear, that it is best *Not to swear
 at all*; so far are they from pleading for
Swearing, or punish those that conscienti-
 ously refuse it.

CXIV. *WILLIAM TINDAL* saith,
 * Our Dealing ought to be so substantial,
 * that our Words might be believed with-
 * out an Oath: Our Words are the Signs
 * of the Truth of our Hearts, in which there
 * ought to be *pure* and *single Love* toward
 * thy Brother. Again he says, * *Swearing*
 * can only be allowed in *Charity*, where *Yea*
 * and *Nay* have lost *Credence*; however, that
 * no Judge or other ought in any Case to
 * compel any Man to *Swear* against his Will.

Peter Martyr, who deserves well of the
English Protestants, confesseth, * That *Chri-
 * stians*

‘ *Christians* ought to live so *Charitably* and *Up-
 ‘ rightly*, as not to need an *Oath*, and that
 ‘ they may not be called upon to *Swear*.
 Again, ‘ Let us so live that there may be
 ‘ no need for us to *Swear* either by *God*, or
 ‘ any other Thing *at all*; and this (says he)
 ‘ is that same *AT ALL*; which *Christ*
 ‘ spoke of.

N. Zegerus upon *Mat. 5. 34.* tells us,
 ‘ That the most *Ancient Writers* from thence
 ‘ concluded all *Oaths* forbidden, and that
 ‘ the bare Word of *Christians* ought to be
 ‘ more *Sacred* and *Firm* than the most *Reli-
 ‘ gious Oaths* of the *Jews*.

CXV. H. GROTIUS, a great and
 Learned Man, excludes all *Oaths*, not on-
 ly such as are used in *common Conversation*;
 but such as relate to *Trade* or *pecuniary
 Matters*; allowing some others for *avoiding
 Infamy*, for *preserving a Friend*, and for a
great Service to their *Country*, as not *moral-
 ly necessary*, and by *Precept*, but only by
Consequence and *Remedy*; concluding that it
 is best to live so, as not to *need an Oath*:
 And so both many of those *Oaths* imposed
 upon us, are laid aside by him; and also he
 gives many *Cautions*, shewing that it is
 best not to *Swear at all*, if it may possibly
 be avoided: But in Answer to his *Interpre-
 tation*; *All Oaths* are *forbid* that are per-
 formable to the *Lord*; Now unless the *vain*

On *Mat. 5.*
 & *De Fur. Bell.*
 ac *Pac.* p. 2.
 c. 26. ad 47.

inconsiderate Oaths, such as are used in common *Traffique* are only those that are to be performed to the Lord. *Solemn Oaths*, such as the *Law* allow'd, are also prohibited. Besides the *Yea* and *Nay* of a true *Christian* is as capable of all those good *Services* as an *Oath*, if the Sanctity of his Faith and Profession be allowed: And if any Prejudices come to a Man's *Friend Country* or *Self*, because his *Yea & Nay* is rejected, it will never lye at his Door, who offers all Christ permits him, and his Conscience will dispense with; but on the *Distruster's* Side, especially, when he that in Conscience can't *Swear*, offers as large CAUTION as he that *SWEARS*, and is willing to undergo *Equal Punishment*, in Case of *Untruth*, that the other by Law sustains for *Perjury*. And those that will have it to relate to *Rash*, and not *Judicial Oaths*, quite cross the Text; for Christ *prohibits* not only *vain* and *Superfluous Oaths*, as now called, such as were always *unlawful*, even under the *Law*; but such as were allowed in the Times of the *Law*, rendring them also by *Evangelical Verity* under the *Gospel*, *Vain*, *Superfluous* and *Unlawful*: For well said Bp. *Sanderson*,
 ' No need to forbid by a new Command
 ' Things, that of themselves were always
 ' Unlawful. Otherwise we must read
 Christ's Words thus, *Ye have heard by them of Old Time, thou shalt not forswear thy self, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine Oaths;*
 but

De Juram.
 Praelect. 5.

but I say unto you, Swear not at all, except before a Judge ; as if Swearing before a Judge under the Law, were not an Oath performable to the Lord ; and such it self the Place most expresly forbids ; or thus, Of Old it was said, thou shalt not forswear thy self, but let your Yea be Yea, and your Nay, Nay. that is perform to God thine Oaths in Truth and Righteousness : But I (who say more, than was said of Old) say unto you, Swear not at all, but perform thine Oaths to God in Truth and Righteousness. The Incoherence of which must needs be obvious to every considerate Person ; yet it is the only Reading that can be left upon those Interpretations. We say, that what God dispensed with under the Law, he resolved to remove under the Gospel, and to wind up Things to a higher Pitch of Truth and Righteousness ; from Adultery in the Act to Adultery in the Thought ; from Revenge, to Sufferance ; from True Swearing, to NO Swearing at all, whereby all Abuse of Oaths and Perjury come to be removed with the Oaths themselves, by working out of Man's Heart that Fraud and Falshood that brought them in, and implanting Evangelical Verity in room thereof, which speaketh the Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth to his Neighbour, and makes a like Matter of Conscience to tell a Lye, as to Forswear. And it is known to Almighty God, and we most heartily desire it may be known and believed

ed by you, that we have no other End nor Inducement to this so general Refusal, we are found in throughout the Nation:

CXVI. Bp. *USHER* is so tender in this Point, that set aside his *Vindication of the Waldenses*, in his *Sum of the Christian-Religion*, he makes it necessary to the taking of an *Oath*, that it be considered,

‘ *First*, If the *Party we deal with* (really) doubt of the Thing we *affirm* or *deny*, thereby making *Distrust* the Cause of *Swearing*, and implying, that not *Custom*, but real *Diffidence* should only continue *Swearing*; consequently, not to continue where *Distrust* is done away.

‘ *Secondly*, It is to be weighed if the *Party’s Doubt* whereof we speak, be *Weighty*, and *Worthy of an Oath*, which we fear, is seldom thought upon; *Custom* prevailing even to *Triffles*, as well as most excessive vain *Swearing* in Common Conversation.

‘ *Thirdly*, If the *Question be Weighty*, whether (saith the Bishop) the *Doubt may be ended with Truly or Verily*; or doubting *Verily, Verily*, as Christ did for you, by his Example we ought to forbear an *Oath*? *Mat. 5. 37.* Wherefore should it not, especially among *Christians*.

‘ *Fourthly*, Whether there be not yet any other fit Means to try out the Matter before we come to an *Oath*.

This

' that invented and made the Necessity of
 ' Oaths, of Bonds, of Securities and all the
 ' Artifices of Human Diffidence and Di-
 ' shonesty: These Things were indeed found
 ' out by Men, but the Necessity of these was
 ' from him that is the Father of all Lies ;
 ' from him that hath made many fair Promi-
 ' ses, but never kept any ; or if he did, it
 ' was to do a bigger MISCHIEF, to flatter
 ' the more ; For so does the DEVIL.

See *Jews Antiquities*, Chap. 12. Pag. 52.
 Concerning the *Pythagoreans*, the *Esseni*,
 and concerning the *Just Man* at *Athens*,
 which they would not have to Swear ; And
 what the *Scholiast* on *Aristophanes*, *Lib. 12.*
p. 286. saith of *Rhadamanthus*.

CXVIII. Lastly, Bp. GAUDEN in his
 Discourse for Solemn Swearing, says thus
 much against it.

1. ' That Diffimulations, Frauds, Jealou-
 ' sies, &c. gave Rise to Oaths.

1. ' That The ancient Christians and Fa-
 ' thers. that they might not be short of the
 ' *Esseni*, who WOULD NOT TAKE
 AN OATH REFUSED TO SWEAR,
 ' saying to the Heathen, *Christianus sum*, I
 ' am a Christian ; to each other *Yea, yea ;*
 ' *Nay, nay ;* thereby keeping up the Sanctity
 ' and Credit of their Profession.

3. That

3. ' That as *Christians*, truly such, we
 ' should possibly need *no Swearing* ; for an
 ' *Oath* is not (says he) *Moral* or *Preceptive*,
 ' but an *Expedient* or *Remedy* only against
 ' *Falseness*.

Lastly, ' That neither a true *Christian*
 ' and good Man need to be *Compelled* to
 ' *Swear*, in order to the *Awing him into*
 ' *Truth-telling*—— Nor is ill Men's *Swear-*
 ' *ing* of much *Credit* ; with more to that
 ' Purpose : What need then is there of
 ' either's *Swearing* ?

The Substance of all which is this ; *Oaths*
 rise with Fraud ; Mens growing *False* and
jealous, *Swearing* or *Awing by Oaths* into
 True Evidence, became an *Expedient* ; and
 during this imbecil and imperfect State of
 Mankind, Almighty God, that hath been
 ever wont to stoop to Man's Weakness, con-
 descended to yield the *Jews* that Custom,
 provided that they refrain'd from *Common*
 and *Idolatrous Oaths* ; and when they were
 called to *Swear*, they did it by the *Name of*
the True God, thereby manifesting their Ac-
 knowledgment of him ; but Christ, who is
 the Restorer of Breaches, the Builder of
 waste Places, the bringer back of the Cap-
 tivity of his People (where *Oaths* were first
 wanted and learned) and the Setter up of
 the Kingdom of God (which stands in Righ-
 teousness) redeems into *Truth-speaking*,
 which fulfils the *Law* by taking away the
 Occasion

Occasion of an *Oath*; and such as are the true, humble and faithful Followers of this worthy Leader, need no *Oath* to *compel* them into Truth, to whom Truth is Natural, being freed by it, *Joh. 8. 32.* from *Fraud* and *Falseness*, and consequently from *Swearing*, which took occasion by it to enter the World. Now we profess our selves in the Fear of Almighty God to be such as have thus learned Christ Jesus, and for the *Reverence* and *Holy Love* we bear to his Righteous Commandment we can't take an *Oath* in any Case.

Object. 'Tis True, and you say well, Oaths only serve till Truth-speaking comes, and you say, it is come to you; But how shall we know that?

Ans. We intreat you to try us: No Man can be justly condemn'd before he be guilty; nor reputed guilty in the Sight of men, till discovered. You will have as easie a Way to catch us at *Lying*, as others at *Forswearing*; and if you find us such, inflict the same Punishment for Our Lye, which is enacted for their Perjury.

Be pleased to consider:

I. The Rise of OATHS.

II. The Prohibition of CHRIST.

III. The Judgment of so many good
HEATHENS.

IV. The

IV. The *Belief* and *Practice* of so many primitive **CHRISTIANS**, Celebrated **FATHERS**, Godly **MARTYRS**, and Learned **PROTESTANTS**.

V. The *Caution* they use, who in any Sense allow of an *Oath*.

VI. That it is matter of *Faith*; and *What is not of Faith, is Sin*: And that we cannot alter our Minds without *Conviction*, unless we should turn *Hypocrites*; And what *Security* can or will you have from our *Oaths*, who must first make us to break the Tye of our own *Conscience* before we can take them? It can't be thought, we should keep with you, when you make us break with our selves.

VII. Consider what *express Scripture* we have for it, and that in the *Judgment* and *Martyrdom* of many good and famous Persons.

VIII. Be pleased to weigh the great **PERJURY** that is now in our World, and daily *Numerous Oaths* belcht forth by some, to show they dare be bold with *Sacred Things*; by others to vent *Passion*; by too many (as they impiously think) to grace their Matter, whilst others have so great a *Doubt* of their own *Credit*, that they *Swear*, to drive, what they say, home; and not a few use it, meerly to fill up vacant places, being barren of better Matter. We think
that

that instead of taking Advantage against us for *Not Swearing*, in so *Forswearing an Age*, we should rather receive *Incouragement* for speaking *That Truth without an Oath*, which others are *compell'd* to by *Oath*, if yet they speak it. *False-speaking* necessitated the Use of *Oaths* (say many) But *Oaths* proving now not the *Remedy*, but the *Disease*, What better *Expedient* can be used than to *come back* to *Truth-speaking*, which endeth *Oaths* in their first Cause, or Occasion at least. However, that such as are *not Sick* should be oblig'd to take the *Potions of the Sick*, only to keep them company, That seems *Unreasonable*.

IX. Be pleased to consider the perishing *Difficulties* we meet withal in our *Commerce* in the World, particularly as *Creditors*, *Executors*, *Merchants*, *Ship-Masters*, *Apprentices*, &c. Men making us *pay* because of our *Tenderness* in this Matter. Oh the OPPRESSION that is exercised in *Petty Courts* and *Sessions* upon many *Hundreds* of us, who know not which way to *Right* our selves, an *Oath* still being required in the Case; the *Refusal* of which for *Conscience-sake*, exposing us to great *Losses*, both of *Estate*, *Liberty* and sometimes *Life* by *Tedious* and *Cruel Imprisonments*.

X. But the *Loss* and *Trouble* is not always our own; Our Neighbours frequently become *Sufferers* against our *Wills*:
First,

First, In that we can *perform no Office* in common with them, however otherwise able to discharge it. *Secondly*, Nor can we serve them in the Capacity of *Witnesses*, which Qualification goes a great way towards the *Maintenance of Justice*; and all because our *solemn Word* will not be received instead of an *Oath*: Relieving us here is a double *Benefit*, for our *Neighbours* share with us in it; and it manifestly tends to the Preservation of *Society*. And whatever any may please to think of us, we are as willing and ready to contribute all *Honest Assistance* to the *Maintenance of Justice*, and answering the Ends of *Government*, according to our *Ability* and *Conscience*, as any Sort of Men that live under it.

XI. And *Lastly*, We intreat you further to consider, that *Our CAUTION* is as large as the Man that *Swears*: For though you make a Difference between him that tells an *Untruth*, and he that *Forswears*, in Favour of the former; yet we cheerfully submit our selves to the *Punishment* of the *Perjur'd*, if we break our *WORD*; do you but please to take us into *equal Privilege* with the *Swearer*: If there be any *Damage*, we conceive it done to *Us* who sustain the *same Punishment* for an *Untruth*, which is the only *Due* of *Perjury*; and if you condescend to yield us the *Kindness* of the one, we offer our Persons to answer the just *Severity* of the other.

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We will add here out of *Hooft's* History of the *Netherlands* a *President*, not impertinent to our Purpose, fol. 464, 465. translated out of *Latin* as follows.

CXIX, In this Assembly of the States (saith *Hooft*) ' there was something attempted towards the Oppression of the *Menists*, ' as appears by a certain Letter, written ' from *Dort*, the last of *March*, by the Lord ' *St. Aldegonde*, to the Minister *Caspanus* ' *Heidanus*; which was thus worded.

' The Cause of the *Menists* hath since Receipt of your and *Tassin's* Letters yesterday been treated of with the most illustrious *Prince* ; And verily, I find it ' more difficult than I had hoped [for ever may and will such Cursed Hopes meet with such wise Repulses from prudent Rulers] ' For, he had at *Middelburgh* given me ' great Hopes, that we should seclude from ' the Freedom of *Burgeffes*, or at least, not ' so solemnly receive those that refused an ' *Oath*. Now he alledgeth, that such a ' thing cannot be concluded without a new ' Convulsion in the Churches ; because the ' *States* will never suffer, that such a Law ' be made, as they judge no ways conducing to the Common Good of the Republick. Yea, he avers, That this was the ' only Cause formerly, which brought their ' *Consistories* so far into the Displeasure of ' the States, that it differed very little, but ' they

‘ they had been all at once voted down, and
 ‘ laid aside by the Council. That they
 ‘ [the *Clergy*] were now again about the
 ‘ same thing, and that in such a season,
 ‘ that no doubt many would pour in cold
 ‘ Water out of the *Popish* Hodg-podge.
 ‘ That his settled Judgment was, that this
 ‘ would turn to great Disadvantage, and
 ‘ breaking down of their Churches.

‘ And when I [saith *Aldegonde*] fervent-
 ‘ ly urged, That we could easily reject those
 ‘ that broak the Band of all Humane So-
 ‘ ciety, upon pretence of Civil and Politi-
 ‘ cal Order : and when I added (saith he)
 ‘ how much *Danger* and *Peril* Church and
 ‘ State were threatned with by such a Con-
 ‘ clusion of the Council, in it self Ungod-
 ‘ ly, He answered me sharply enough, That
 ‘ those men’s Y E A must pass for an Oath ;
 ‘ and that we must not urge this thing any
 ‘ further, or we must confess, that the Pa-
 ‘ pists had Reason to force us to a Religion
 ‘ that was against our Consciences ; and that
 ‘ the North-Hollanders would not at all al-
 ‘ low of it.

‘ In short (saith he) I scarce see any thing
 ‘ we can get done in this Point, which ve-
 ‘ rily [ye may believe him upon his Prote-
 ‘ station] ‘ is the greater Smart to me ; the
 ‘ more I observe that the Minds of many
 ‘ Honest Men, by the pretending of I know
 ‘ not what unseasonable Stumbling Blocks,
 ‘ will be thereby imbitter’d, yea, I could

‘ almost say, wounded, to see them less affected to those, that to their uttermost seek to advance the Cause of the Church.

‘ The *PRINCE* (saith he) partly in the Name of the *State*, and partly of himself, chid me, as if we were about to set up in our Clergy a *Dominion over the Conscience* ; and as if they endeavour, by their *Laws* and *Constitutions* to subject all others to them : And he praised the Saying of a *Monk* that was lately here, who answer’d to the Objection [of the Persecuting Spirit of the *Romish Church*] ‘ *That our Pot had not gone so long to the Fire as theirs, whom we did so much revile upon that account* —

‘ And that he clearly saw, That before Two Ages passed, the Church-Dominion would upon both sides stand on even Ground.

To which *Hoofst* adds, ‘ By this we may observe, of what Consequence the *Prince* and *States* then held *Liberty of Conscience*, to be.

And that what we have hitherto said, may not be thought a thing Impracticable, we shall present you with the Judgment and *Edicts* of Foreign Governments.

Here follow *Two Letters* of the *Grave* of *Nassau* and *Prince of Orange*, to the *Magistrates* of the *City of Middelburgh*, in *Behalf* of the *Menists* there.

CXX. A Copy of the First Letter.

F*Orasmuch as a Supplication*
hath been presented unto his
Excellency in behalf of certain In-
habitants of this City of Middel-
burgh; complaining thereby, That
the Magistrates of the said City
had lately caused their Shops to
be shut, and consequently pro-
hibited their Trade, which is
yet the only means which they
have to maintain their Families;
the said Prohibition proceeding
from their not having yet taken
the usual OATH, as others:
The said Inhabitants further remon-
strating

M 3

strating, how that they now, for
 a certain long Term of Years,
 have, without taking the said
Oath, freely born all Civil Bur-
 thens, Contributions and Taxes
 equally with other Burgessees and
 Inhabitants of this said City,
 without ever having been in any
 Default: and therefore ought at
 present still to remain unmole-
 sted, seeing they do therein not
 desire any thing else, than to live
 in the *Liberty of their Consciences*,
 upon which Account this pre-
 sent War against the King of
Spain hath been by his Subjects
 taken up, and all Ceremonies
 contrary thereunto resisted; in
 which such Advance is, through
 the Help of God, made, that
 the aforesaid *Liberty of Conscience*
 is preserved; and therefore it
 would be an Unequal Thing to
 Deprive the *Supplicants* thereof,
 who

who have helped to acquire the same by bearing Taxes, Contributions, and other Burthens, not without great Peril of their Bodies and Lives; consonant to which they have presented a Request to the aforesaid Magistrates, but got for Answer, *That they must regulate themselves according to the Policy and Order of the aforesaid City*: Whereby (*saieth the Petition*) the aforesaid Magistrates seem to endeavour by the *Oath*, not only totally to ruin and expel out of these Lands the Petitioners, with their Wives and Children, residing in *Middelburgh*; but consequently innumerable others, in *Holland* and *Zeeland*, who have (according to his EXCELLENCY's Proclamations) placed themselves under his Excellency's Protection, by which no man can be any ways

benefited; but all these Lands received great and considerable Damage, because thereby the Traffique thereof would be every where greatly diminished: Intreating therefore, and humbly begging his Excellency, that looking upon their Case with Compassion, he would take due Course about it, especially seeing that the aforesaid Petitioners do profer, that their *Y E A* passing for an *Oath*, the Transgressors thereof should be punished as Oath-Breakers.

Therefore his Excellency having considered the Premises, and having maturely deliberated upon the same, hath, with the previous Advice of the Governour and Council of Zeeland, ordered and appointed, ordereth and appointeth hereby, That the aforesaid Petitioners Y E A shall be received by the Magistrates

strates of the aforesaid City instead of an *OATH*; provided, that the Transgressors thereof shall be punished as Oath-Breakers and Perjured Persons. His Excellency charging and commanding the Magistrates of Middelburgh, and all others whom this may concern, No further to oppress the Petitioners contrary to their Consciences, concerning the Oath; but suffer them to Open their Shops, and Enjoy their Trades, as they formerly have done: all by Provision, and till such time as there shall be, in more Tranquillity of Affairs, with ripe Deliberation, regard being had thereunto, ordained therein, as shall be found convenient.

This done under his EXCELLENCY's Name and Seal in the City of Middelburgh, upon the 26. January, 1577.

GUILLIAUME de NASSAU.

By my Gracious Lord, the *Prince*, subscribed,
De Baudemont.

CXXI. A Copy of the Second Letter.

*The Prince of Orange,
 Grave of Nassau, Lord
 and Baron of Bueda,
 Diest, &c.*

Honourable, Honest, Worshipful, Wise,
 Discreet, Dear *and* Singular.

F*Orasmuch as certain House-keepers there inhabiting, being, as they say, Menists, have, by way of Complaint divers times signified to us, how that You are daily Molesting them, and Depriving them of the Means of Gaining in Rest and Quietness their Livings for them and their Families ; forbidding them to open their Shops, under the Pretence, that they should Refuse*

ful to take an *Oath* in the same Form as other Burgesles; *upon which We having taken ripe Deliberation: And forasmuch as the aforesaid People do profer to bear equally all Burthens with other Citizens, and even in the Case of Arms, which mostly moves them to contribute, do you such Performances at their Charges, as your selves, or they that shall have the Orders, shall find in all Reason and Equity fit to be done, and they will bear it:*

We therefore conceive, that ye do very ill, not to permit them to live in Peace and Quietness, according to the Mind of their Conscience, according to the Act which We, with the Advice of the Governour and Council formerly afforded them, which they say, they have exhibited to you; And yet notwithstanding, We find that you have
hitherto

hitherto refused to give heed unto it, and to our precedent Letters, and so we are constrain'd for this last time to write this by which we plainly declare unto you, That it concerns not you to trouble yourselves in particular with any Man's Conscience, so long as nothing is treated or done that might extend to any Man's Scandal; in which Case we will neither respect nor bear any Man.

And therefore we charge and order you expressly, To desist all further Molestation or Hinderance of the said Menists in their Merchandize or Handicrafts to gain their Livelihood for their Wives and Children; suffering them to open their Shops, and Work as they have in times past done; till such time as there shall be otherwise ordered by the Generality (who are thereunto qualified.)

· fied.) *And therefore take heed that ye do nothing against this, and the Act to them granted, or to further any Fines from them upon that Account; provided nothing be by them attempted, which might tend to the Scandal of any Man: And they shall bear all Civil and Equal Burthens, as other Men. Herewith, &c.*

Subscribed by Copy,

De Baudemont.

CXXII. Also, by the *Treaties of Peace* between the *States General* of the *United Provinces*, and the *Kings of England, Spain, &c. Anno 1674.* there is a special Article therein contained, That, ‘ *All their Ship-Masters of Merchant-Ships, shall carry along with them a Sea-Brief, according to the Form thereby prescribed.*

In which it is expressly declared, That ‘ *Such Master shall come before the Magistrates, and by his solemn Oath testifie, that such Ship, whereof he is Master, doth properly belong unto the Subjects of the said States General;*

General; unto which Sea-Brief, under the Seal
of the City's intire Faith and Credit is given.

And although by the said *Treaties*, the
Master was to give his *Oath*, yet the Magi-
strates in *Holland* do take the *Solemn Affir-
mation* of such as cannot Swear, instead of
an *Oath*, and insert it so accordingly in their
Sea-Briefs; and then it runs thus, ' *These*
' *are to certifie, &c. That A. B. hath before*
' *us Solemnly Affirmed and Declared, that*
' *the Ship C. D. whereof he is Master, doth*
' *properly belong and appertain to the Subjects*
' *of the States General of the United Pro-*
' *vinces, &c.*

Which can be sufficiently evidenced, if
required.

This was the *Care*, this the *Condescension*
of other Governments, for the Relief of
Persons under our Circumstances: And we
take Liberty to affirm, That the Trade and
Wealth of the *United Provinces*, are ow-
ing more to the Ingenuity and Industry of
those Indulg'd *Dissenters*, than to them of
the National Religion, who would have
slugg'd and tyranniz'd all into Poverty and
Vassalage.

Have Regard to our *Suffering Condition*,
we beseech you, and shew your selves both
Natural to a Member (be we reputed the
meanest) of your own Civil Body, and so
far

far Lovers of him, who said, *Swear not at all*, as not to continue us Sufferers for not acting against his Command, at least, our Sense of it, and therein of our own Consciences; but make some *Provision* for us, as well as other Countries have done before you, as in your Wisdom you shall think meet; that all those, who are of the Society of the People called *Quakers*, and known of themselves to be so, *shall not be molested for the future upon the Account of Swearing, but their Solemn YEA or NAY shall be taken in lieu thereof, and their Untruth, or Breach of Word, Punishable as Perjury.*

God, we know, that delights in Mercy, and in all Acts of Tenderneſs to the Sons of Men, will favour ſo Natural, ſo Generous and ſo *Chriſtian* an Enterprize, and the Propoſers, Promoters and Effecters of this happy Deliverance from the heavy Clog of *Swearing*, under which we and our Families have ſo long groaned, will not, we dare believe, go without their Rewards at the Hands of the Almighty, whom, at what rate ſoever ye ſhall deal with us, we do, from the bottom of our Souls, humbly and heartily implore, That it would pleaſe him ſo to diſpoſe your Hearts, as you may beſt Diſcharge that High Truſt repoſed in you, to the Honour of his Great Name, and the Proſperity of this Famous Kingdom, the moſt certain Foundation of True Felicity to
your

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your selves ; and which will give, as a
good Example to others, so the clearest Re-
putation to you and your Posterity.

*This performed in the Name and
for the Service of the People
call'd QUAKERS.*

William Penn.

Richard Richardson.

FINIS.

